

F1 RECORD-BREAKING CALENDAR SET FOR 2022

AUTOSPORT

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21 OCTOBER 2021

VERSTAPPEN

F1 2021

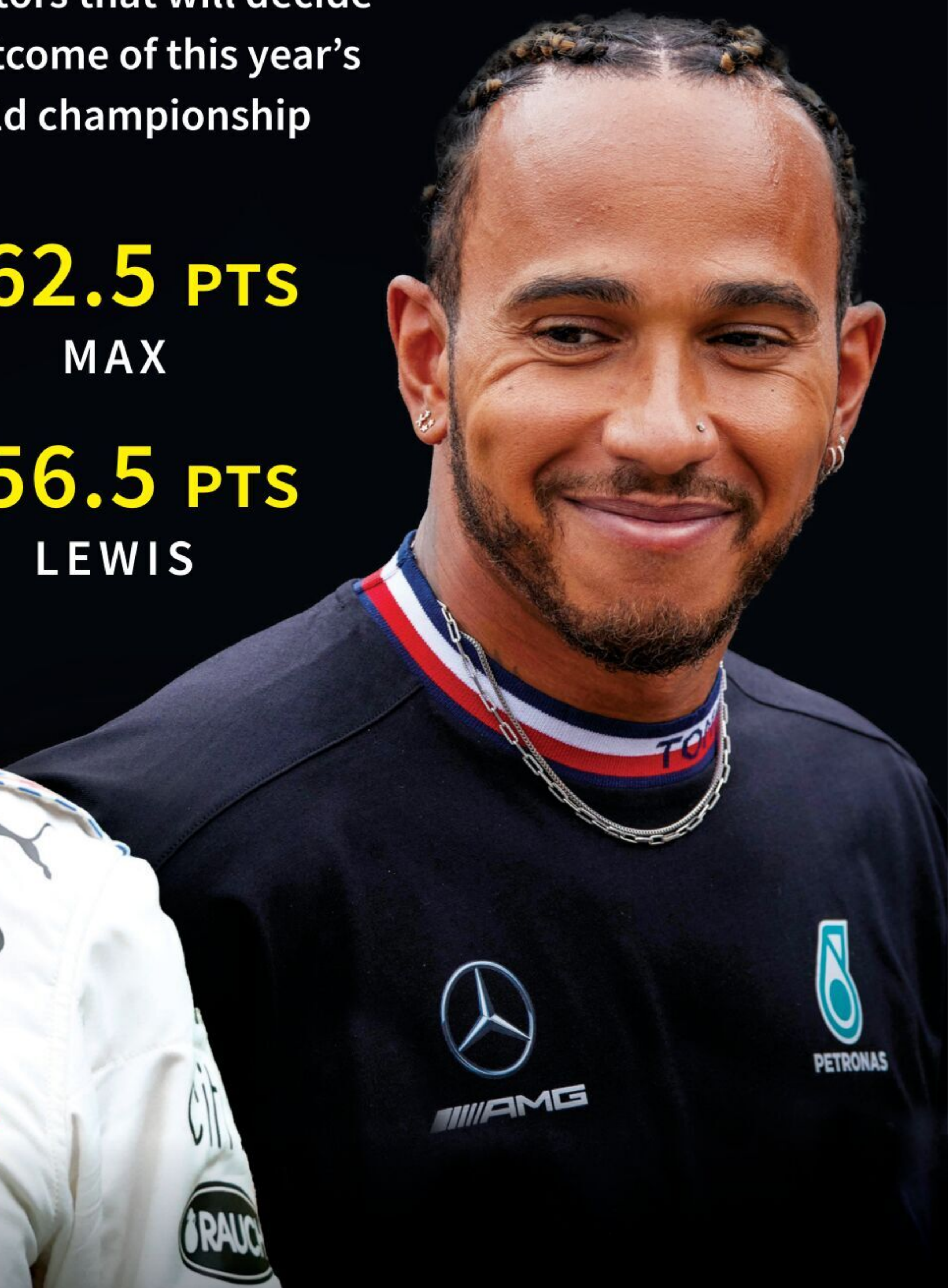
HAMILTON

WHO WILL TAKE THE CROWN?

The factors that will decide
the outcome of this year's
world championship

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MAX

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PLUS

◆ Evans takes WRC to the wire ◆ How Sutton became a BTCC great ◆ Jo Siffert 50 years on



Product of the environment

When polar ice melts, it harms habitats as far away as Asia and Africa. In 2022, conservationist (and Christopher Ward Challenger) Tom Hicks will lead an expedition to the North Pole to measure ice melt rates for the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF). On his wrist will be the C60 Anthropocene GMT. Able to monitor two time zones at once, waterproof to 600m and with a sapphire dial that recalls polar ice, it can withstand whatever the Arctic throws at it. And with five percent from the sale of each watch going to DSWF, it's playing its own part in the fight against climate change.



**Christopher
Ward**

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Will Lewis or Max have the final word?

This year's Formula 1 title fight is arguably the best since 2012. The 2018 contest was good, but Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton seem more evenly matched than Sebastian Vettel and peak Hamilton were. Both teams and drivers have made mistakes *and* pulled off some brilliant performances. Things have not been predictable.

Since the pace of the Red Bull RB16B became obvious early in the year, many have had their money on Verstappen ending Hamilton's run of titles. But, as Alex Kalinauckas shows on page 16, there are many factors that could swing the battle one way or another – and some of them are outside the drivers' control.

One critical element will be optimising the car at each circuit. That sounds obvious, but it is not the same as having the fastest machine. Last time out in Turkey the two big teams should have been closer, but Red Bull never got in the right set-up window while Mercedes found the 'goldilocks' zone. Who will get it right at Austin this weekend?

One driver who does look on his way to securing another crown is Ash Sutton. He has a 32-point lead heading into Sunday's Brands Hatch British Touring Car finale. Marcus Simmons catches up with him and finds out how he has bounced back from early career setbacks and personal challenges to become a tin-top great on p26.

We also take a look back at the life of the hard-charging Jo Siffert (p32), 50 years after his death, and report from Rally Spain, where Elfyn Evans did enough to take his title challenge down to the wire (p36).



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor

kevin.turner@autosport.com

NEXT WEEK
28 OCTOBER

US GP and BTCC finale
As the F1 title fight heats up at Austin, the BTCC gets decided



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Red Bull, Etherington/Motorsport Images

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The old-school Imola track gets another race in place of COVID-enforced absentee China

F1 SHOWS HOW TO CRAM 23 RACES INTO EIGHT MONTHS

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 has revealed its record-breaking 23-race calendar for the 2022 season, with Imola serving as a surprise late addition to the schedule.

The FIA's World Motor Sport Council met last Friday to approve the provisional schedule for next season, which will start in Bahrain on 20 March and end in Abu Dhabi on 20 November. Saudi Arabia will host the second round of the season less than four months after its inaugural grand prix in Jeddah, while the Australian Grand Prix returns in April after being cancelled in 2020 and 2021.

The Chinese GP remains absent amid the country's ongoing travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with F1 saying it would return to Shanghai "as soon as conditions allow". That has paved the way for Imola to secure a slot on the calendar for the third season in a row. The Emilia Romagna GP is scheduled for 24 April as the first European race of the season.

Italy will be joined in hosting two grands prix next year by the United States. The Miami GP will debut on

8 May, while the United States GP retains its traditional late autumn slot, paired with the Mexican GP.

Along with Australia, three other events that have not been staged since the start of the pandemic are scheduled to return next year. Canada will go back to back with Azerbaijan in June, while the early October races in Singapore and Japan will complete a triple-header with Russia later in the season.

The British GP will take place at Silverstone on 3 July, one week before the Austrian GP.

"We are excited to announce the 2022 calendar as we prepare to enter a new era for the sport with brand new regulations and cars for next year that are designed to create closer racing," said F1 CEO and president Stefano Domenicali. "This season has been incredible so far with great battles on the track, large audiences tuning in and fans returning to the races after the impact of the pandemic. We look forward to welcoming more fans back next season and hope 2022 feels more normal than the life we have all experienced in the past two years."

The early end of the season will ensure there is no overlap with the football World Cup, which will start in Qatar one day after the Abu Dhabi GP, but that compression of the calendar has resulted in two triple-headers in the middle of the schedule. As in 2021, Spa, Zandvoort and Monza will host races on consecutive weekends after the summer break, with just one week then separating the run from the second triple-header starting in Russia.

McLaren had been outspoken about the impact of triple-headers on personnel, and team principal Andreas Seidl hoped there would be a solution in the long-term. "Generally our position hasn't changed," he said. "For us, we are in favour of a race calendar of maximum 20 races. I think that also on the commercial side, the focus on quality and exclusivity works."

LUKE SMITH





ALL PHOTOGRAPHY
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IMAGES



...as Vettel warns of staff loss and devalued GPs

FORMULA 1

Four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel believes that Formula 1's continuing calendar expansion puts it at risk of shedding important staff and devaluing its races.

F1 is heading for its biggest world championship season next year, with 23 races crammed in between the middle of March and the middle of November. The stresses and strains that the schedule is putting on staff have already been highlighted by several teams, although they approved F1's plans for 2022.

In an interview with selected media including Autosport, Vettel, who arrived in F1 in an era when there were 17 races but more tests, said: "This is only my opinion, and it's not worth anything, but I think we should not have that many races. It's for a number of reasons. I think one, maybe it's too many races for the people to watch. It's not special anymore, if there's that many."

"And second, I feel for [the staff]. Us drivers, we are at the good side of things: we can arrive on a Wednesday night and leave if we find a flight etcetera on a Sunday night."

"But the team already has a lot more stress. They arrive Monday or Saturday the week before, they build the garage, prepare the cars, and then also they have to run the

full week and then pack down, send everything back, and prepare back in the factory. For them, it's a job where you're busy all week days and nearly every weekend, so you have no time for yourself."

"And I think we are in a time where people are growing more and more conscious that they have a life too, and that the life doesn't belong to the employer."

The swelling F1 calendar, allied to the inclusion of the much-hated triple-headers, has already led to some staff electing to go for factory jobs or move away from grand prix racing completely.

Haas F1 boss Gunther Steiner felt that teams were "facing the reality" of employees "getting tired and being worn out", prompting them to try different approaches, including staff rotation and greater incentives for those spending more time away from home. "We try to do things differently to help them to get along, so we can get to the end of the season with people not worn out and not wanting to leave Formula 1," he said. "You just have to work at it and try to find compromises which work for the team and work for the people."

AlphaTauri team boss Franz Tost was less sympathetic, calling the 23-race calendar "fantastic" before adding: "If someone doesn't like it, then he should go."

JONATHAN NOBLE, ROBERTO CHINCERO & LUKE SMITH



GALLOWAY

2022 FORMULA 1 CALENDAR

ROUND	VENUE	DATE
1	Sakhir BHR	20 March
2	Jeddah SAU	27 March
3	Melbourne AUS	10 April
4	Imola ITA	24 April
5	Miami USA	8 May
6	Barcelona ESP	22 May
7	Monte Carlo MCO	29 May
8	Baku AZE	12 June
9	Montreal CAN	19 June
10	Silverstone GBR	3 July
11	Red Bull Ring AUT	10 July
12	Paul Ricard FRA	24 July
13	Hungaroring HUN	31 July
14	Spa BEL	28 August
15	Zandvoort NLD	4 September
16	Monza ITA	11 September
17	Sochi RUS	25 September
18	Marina Bay SGP	2 October
19	Suzuka JPN	9 October
20	Austin USA	23 October
21	Mexico City MEX	30 October
22	Interlagos BRA	13 November
23	Yas Marina ARE	20 November



A Lambo has raced in an FIA world championship before. This is Eric van de Poele in the 1991 F1 season

Lamborghini closes in on LMDh Le Mans programme

LE MANS/WEC/IMSA

Lamborghini is moving closer to an LMDh prototype entry into the World Endurance Championship and the IMSA SportsCar Championship. A link-up with Volkswagen group sister marques Porsche and Audi appears near-certain for the 2024 season.

The Italian manufacturer's racing department has received an initial go-ahead for plans for a programme first outlined in the summer, Autosport has learned. The project now appears subject to Lamborghini Squadra Corse finding funded partner teams to run an LMDh design based on the same Multimatic-built LMP2 chassis and engine to be used by Porsche and Audi from 2023.

Lamborghini Squadra Corse head Giorgio Sanna explained in late July that the marque would not run an overt factory team in either the WEC or North America. Instead, it would follow the model it already operates in the GT3 arena: Lamborghini offers financial and technical assistance, as well as the loan of works drivers, for the semi-official teams running its Huracan GT3 Evos in series such as the GT World Challenge Europe.

Lamborghini is known to be in contact with teams able to raise partial funding about running its LMDh in the WEC and IMSA arenas.

A Lamborghini spokesman offered no comment to Autosport, except to insist that there is no final sign-off from the board for the project.

The WEC is still facing a shortfall in Le Mans Hypercar entries prior to the first wave of LMDh hybrids coming on

stream in 2023. Glickenhaus has not committed to a full programme in 2022, while Peugeot will not decide when it will begin racing its new 9X8 until after initial testing this winter.

That explains a move to allow grandfathered LMP1 machinery to race on next year, offering Alpine the opportunity to continue for another season with its ORECA-Gibson design run by Signatech. The proposal was rubberstamped by last week's FIA World Motor Sport Council.

Alpine stated on the announcement of its LMDh programme earlier this month that it is still reviewing how to race on in the WEC before the LMDh comes on stream in 2024. Signatech boss Philippe Sinault has previously stated a desire to continue with the A480, which previously raced as the Rebellion R-13, for another season.

The Alpine will be developed out of the forthcoming new-rules ORECA LMP2 design, which will come under the remit of Remi Taffin, who has joined ORECA as its new technical director following his departure from the Alpine F1 team in the summer.

Taffin, who engineered Fernando Alonso to his two F1 world titles in 2005 and 2006, had been powertrain technical director at Renault since 2016. The 46-year-old will take up his new role at ORECA, which encompasses its chassis division at Signes near Paul Ricard and the satellite engine shop in Magny-Cours, at the start of December. He replaces David Flourey, who is now full-time with Toyota after its tie-up with ORECA finished at the end of last year.

GARY WATKINS

FIA receptive to ratings changes

ENDURANCE RACING

Changes are afoot to the FIA system of driver categorisation. The governing body has revealed that it is reviewing the system ahead of the publication of 2022 gradings in the middle of next month.

The FIA looks set to respond to a call for wholesale revisions from GT promoter Stephane Ratel (revealed last week in Autosport). Frederic Bertrand, under whose remit the system comes at the FIA, has conceded that changes are needed.

"We need to address the full hierarchy to make sure everyone finds their right place," said Bertrand (below, with Jean Todt). "Should we add a level? I don't know. Should we redistribute the current levels we have? Probably."

Ratel has argued that the current distinction between the platinum and gold gradings, the home of true professionals, makes no sense as it stands. He wants young drivers stepping off the single-seater ladder to be automatically classified as gold, and to do away with the so-called super-silvers to leave the silver category to true amateurs.

"The points Stephane mentions are all true," said Bertrand. "One point that is very difficult is the silver driver who has come up the single-seater ladder but doesn't have the results to be classified as gold, but he or she is racing against drivers who are silver because they are under 30 but don't have the same level of experience."

"This is linked to the pure amateur system: we have bronze drivers, who are very important to the promoters because they are financing the cars."

Bertrand insisted that the concerns of Ratel and other series promoters will be addressed when the driver categorisation committee meets this week: "I feel confident that we will find a good option with the contribution of each promoter to identify the right solutions for 2022."

GARY WATKINS



GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

FE goes radical on quali format

FORMULA E

Formula E will adopt a tournament-style knockout qualifying format, which borrows heavily from the deceased Superleague Formula, from the inbound 2022 season as the electric championship bids to increase its credentials as a competitive meritocracy.

The outgoing qualifying system sends the top six drivers in the points out first to lap on a circuit that hasn't been rubbered in and is therefore at its slowest. But a growing resistance from teams, combined with Formula E bosses' desires to create repeat winners and ditch some of the random results, has led the FIA World Motor Sport Council to approve this shake-up.

The new format will initially divide the 22-car grid into two groups of 11 based on the championship table. Both groups will have a 10-minute session to post a flying lap. The four drivers who set the fastest time in each group will then progress into two-way 'duels'.

Drivers will be eliminated via quarter-final and semi-final heats to leave a two-car battle for pole. The fastest driver will land first on the grid, second for the runner-up, third and fourth will go to the slower drivers in the semi-finals, while the quarter-finals will decide positions fifth through to eighth. The rest of the starting order will be defined



Late, lamented Superleague Formula used knockout qualifying system too

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

by the best times set by those who failed to initially progress through the groups of 11.

An FIA statement read: "A new qualifying format divided into groups and followed by head-to-head duels has been approved to maximise excitement for fans and encourage the emergence of the best drivers and teams."

While a cure for qualifying may have been administered, Formula E's calendar headache lingers on. The WMSC has approved an updated schedule for 2022, which ditches an inaugural Cape Town E-Prix to create a gap in early March. The

loss of the South African round follows ongoing COVID-19 trouble in the nation.

Maiden races for Vancouver (2 July) and the season finale in Seoul (13-14 August) have retained their places, and the Jakarta E-Prix looks set to finally go ahead on 4 June despite unrelenting pressure for the reported £53million bid to be invested elsewhere following a spate of deadly floods. The London E-Prix returns to the ExCeL Centre for the penultimate round across 30-31 July.

MATT KEW

Ireland in mix for final WRC slot

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Rally Northern Ireland is understood to be in the mix to fill the final vacant spot on the 13-round 2022 World Rally Championship calendar released last week.

Following last Friday's meeting of the FIA World Motor Sport Council, the WRC related next year's schedule with a Tarmac event listed as TBC for 18-21 August. The governing body has been outspoken about its wishes to bring the championship back to the UK, which last hosted a round in 2019 with Rally GB, before COVID-19

forced the cancellation of last year's event.

As previously reported, a bid to take the WRC to Northern Ireland was among six candidates vying over four vacant spots on a partial nine-round WRC calendar issued in July. Reports emerging from Northern Ireland remain hopeful that it will still secure the final berth on the 2022 schedule, although an agreement is yet to be struck between organisers and WRC Promoter. Conveniently, the TBC date is the same slot earmarked for the 2022 Ulster Rally.

Last week's calendar release did confirm that Rally New Zealand, one of the events



Retro Ulster Rally action: this is Tony Pond's Rover in 1985

cancelled amid the pandemic in 2020, will return to the schedule. Finland and Croatia secured the other two vacant spots.

TOM HOWARD

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FORMULA 2/3 CALENDAR (* = F2 only)		
ROUND	VENUE	DATE
1	Sakhir BHR	19-20 March
2*	Jeddah SAU	26-27 March
3	Imola ITA	23-24 April
4	Barcelona ESP	21-22 May
5*	Monte Carlo MCO	28-29 May
6*	Baku AZE	11-12 June
7	Silverstone GBR	2-3 July
8	Red Bull Ring AUT	9-10 July
9	Hungaroring HUN	30-31 July
10	Spa BEL	27-28 August
11	Zandvoort NLD	3-4 September
12	Monza ITA	10-11 September
13*	Sochi RUS	24-25 September
14*	Yas Marina ARE	19-20 November

SUTTON
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F2 schedule explodes to 14 rounds, 28 races

FORMULA 2/3

The FIA Formula 2 Championship has ballooned from eight race weekends to 14 for next season, with 28 races on the cards.

F2 and its sister FIA F3 Championship switched to triple-headers and fewer rounds in 2021, and ran on separate weekends in what has become regarded as a failed experiment. For 2022, the two series will run together on nine weekends, with the senior F2 field going solo at a further five. The events, all of which will be double-headers, will continue to run as Formula 1 supports.

Rene Rosin, boss of the Prema Racing squad with which Oscar Piastri is leading the 2021 F2 standings and Dennis Hauger

won this year’s F3 title, has welcomed the change, but hopes that series boss Bruno Michel can carry out his pledge to help the F2 teams complete the longest second-tier season since 1975, when the old European F2 Championship also ran to 14 rounds.

“I didn’t like the format of this year,” said Rosin, “and I’m happy that we’re back to two races per round. I think the calendar is very well spread for F3. Nine rounds is something very good, and finishing in September means we have time for testing and to return to the Macau Grand Prix [for the first time since 2019] if we can go next year.

“For F2, 12 rounds would have been the minimum, and it’s always positive to have more races with F1. But of course we need

help – on budget we cannot go above what we are at the moment because the drivers are paying for it, and you’re right at the limit. Bruno has said he will support the teams, and that’s something positive.”

One big negative of this year’s F2 schedule was that only four rounds had been run by early September, meaning Piastri scarcely got a look-in for an F1 seat for 2022. “This has been a downside this year,” added Rosin. “When we are in Monza, it’s normally when the F1 teams are selecting their drivers. This is something to consider. We need to learn from our previous years’ mistakes, and the promoter and all parties agreed we have to go back to the previous format.”

MARCUS SIMMONS

Old WRC cars allowed to rally on for privateers

WRC

Current-generation World Rally Cars will be allowed into next year’s World Rally Championship with a reduced power output.

The WRC will move to new hybrid Rally1 regulations next year, with Toyota, Hyundai and M-Sport Ford currently developing brand-new cars. But the FIA has now confirmed that the current

WRC cars, introduced in 2017, can compete next year.

The older cars will run with approximately 30bhp less than they do now, via a modification to the turbo restrictor, to ensure that they cannot topple the new Rally1 machinery.

“The cars will be eligible to compete in the events next year and in terms of the interest shown, from the manufacturer teams there is not a lot of interest shown,”

the FIA’s rally department explained to Autosport.

“The priority is to support the privateers and the gentleman drivers who already have the cars and want to continue to compete in WRC events. The only change on the cars will be to change the restrictor from 36mm to 33.7mm, which is calculated to be a power reduction of 30 horsepower.”

TOM HOWARD



Lorenzo Bertelli is a stalwart privateer in an M-Sport Fiesta

MCKLEIN



CANTRELL/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Harvey excited by team switch

INDYCAR SERIES

British IndyCar Series racer Jack Harvey has been confirmed at Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing for 2022, joining Graham Rahal and an as-yet-unannounced driver as the team expands to three full-time cars.

Harvey, the 2012 British Formula 3 champion and a two-time Indy Lights-runner-up, has made the jump from Meyer Shank Racing following two part-time seasons in collaboration with Schmidt Peterson Motorsports and, since 2020, two full schedules as a partnership with Andretti Autosport. This year he qualified six times in the top six but his best race results were two fourth places, in a year when his part-time team-mate Helio Castroneves won the Indianapolis 500 on his first race outing with MSR.

Yet Harvey insists it was not frustration that drove him to join a different team. "Helio's a really great guy and I've probably learned more from him than from anyone else so far in my career," he said. "I'm happy for him that he's able to come back full-time. I know how strong MSR can be, and I would not have walked out on that for just any old ride."

He added that it was RLLR's race day

performances that persuaded him to shift his allegiance. "I would watch the races back, and I always felt like Graham's race pace was exceptionally strong, and as a team they always found a way to get their drivers to the front," he said. "There's definitely been a few races where I was envious of that."

Harvey, 28, went on to explain: "I've been working for this kind of opportunity since I was nine years old at my local go-karting track in the UK. All of those years, days, hours, high moments, down moments have been trying to get to this level of opportunity. I'm so thankful and grateful to [RLLR chiefs] Bobby [Rahal], Mike [Lanigan], David [Letterman], Piers [Phillips, team president]."

Harvey's place at MSR alongside Castroneves will be taken by former champion and Indy 500 winner Simon Pagenaud. Autosport sources continue to suggest that Formula 2 ace Christian Lundgaard – who made a startling one-off for RLLR at the Indy road course in August – will get the third seat alongside Rahal and Harvey. Two-time Indy 500 winner Takuma Sato, who Harvey is replacing, is expected to land at Dale Coyne Racing.

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

IN THE HEADLINES

KUBICA IN FOR MAGNUSSEN

Alfa Romeo Formula 1 reserve Robert Kubica will rejoin the High Class Racing LMP2 squad for the Bahrain double-header that closes this year's World Endurance Championship. The Pole, who raced for the team in the Daytona 24 Hours, is driving the team's Pro-Am ORECA-Gibson 07 in place of Jan Magnussen, who is unavailable for the second of the two races for business reasons. Kubica will share the car with Anders Fjordbach and Dennis Anderson in the two races.

ALESI LOSES OUT ON TITLE

Giuliano Alesi lost out on Japan's Super Formula Lights title in a dramatic final round at Motegi last weekend. Alesi had put himself in the picture by winning the first race in his TOM'S Dallara-Toyota, while rival Teppei Natori, who topped qualifying in his B-Max Dallara-Spiess, took a grid penalty for an engine change and could only recover to fourth. But a collision in the wet second race sent Alesi to the pits with a puncture; ex-FIA F3 racer Natori was given a drivethrough penalty for the clash but claimed the crown. Alesi dominated the finale to finish just six points adrift.

LYNNS TO TEAM UP IN LMP3

The dad and little brother of sportscar and Formula E ace Alex Lynn are to team up in the Le Mans Cup next season. Shaun Lynn returns to United Autosports, where he last raced in 2020, to share a Ligier JSP320 with younger son Maxwell, who has Caterham and historic racing experience.

BUTEL OUT OF BTCC FINALE

British Touring Car Championship regular Jack Butel will be missing from the field for this weekend's Brands Hatch finale due to concussion suffered last time out at Donington Park. His place in the Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai will be taken by Excelr8 backer Trade Price Cars' co-chief Andy Wilmot, who did a half-season in the BTCC in 2015.

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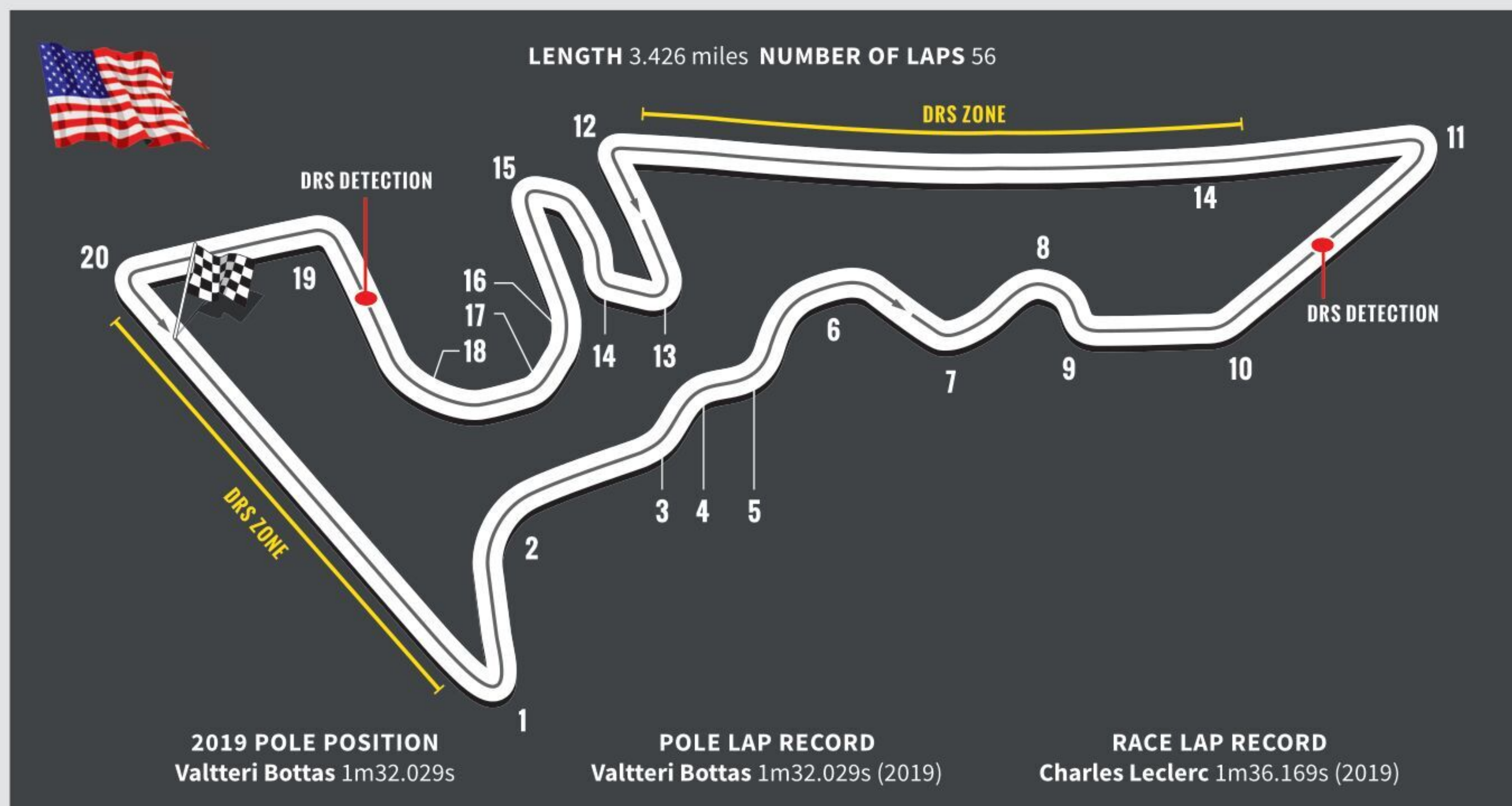
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Saturday 23 October

FP3 1900

QUALIFYING 2200

Sunday 24 October

RACE 2000

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HIGHLIGHTS

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TYRE ALLOCATION



CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

Drivers

1	Verstappen	262.5
2	Hamilton	256.5
3	Bottas	177
4	Norris	145
5	Perez	135

Constructors

1	Mercedes	433.5
2	Red Bull	397.5
3	McLaren	240
4	Ferrari	232.5
5	Alpine	104



RACE STATS

Previous winners

2019	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes
2018	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari
2017	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2016	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2013	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2012	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2007	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2006	Michael Schumacher	Ferrari



Best circuit results

Hamilton	1st x 5
Vettel	1st x 1
Raikkonen	1st x 1
Bottas	1st x 1
Verstappen	2nd x 1
Ricciardo	3rd x 2
Alonso	3rd x 1
Leclerc	4th x 1
Perez	5th x 1
Sainz	6th x 1



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The dangers behind Max's words

When Verstappen downplays the significance of winning the title, it may just be a reflection of his chilled outlook, but it's not the classic mindset of a champion

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

“So far, we've had a really good year, so it's not going to change the world for me if we finish first or second at the end of the day.” Max Verstappen spoke these words in the post-race press conference at the 2021 Turkish Grand Prix, after he'd been soundly beaten by Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas in the wet conditions at Istanbul Park. While that result was something of a surprise given Verstappen's wet-weather prowess, as he acknowledged at the time, the Dutchman had already expressed the same nonchalant-sounding view on his chances of winning his ultra-close battle with Lewis Hamilton for the 2021 crown three days earlier.

But, after the Istanbul Park race, Verstappen was back in front of a battle he'd been commandingly winning at one stage – his 32-point advantage post-Austria the largest margin between the contenders all year – and the championship's end is in sight. Plus, Hamilton faces considerable reliability worries. So, why is Verstappen saying this? And why does it suddenly sound like he's preparing the ground for defeat in a title fight that's captivated F1?

Red Bull has had the best package for much of the season, as its eight wins and poles (to Mercedes' six and five) attest, but since Verstappen's dominant display on home soil at Zandvoort last month it has been the Black Arrows squad that has clearly had the upper hand. Perhaps Verstappen is responding to the reality that Mercedes is in the ascendancy now.

“Why does it sound like he's preparing the ground for defeat in a fight that's captivated F1?”

Verstappen is very relaxed and assured in himself – and this can be seen in his words. His joking reply that he felt “so nervous I can barely sleep!” after Hamilton's comments on how he thought his rival was coping with a first F1 title tilt in the aftermath of their Monza shunt is good evidence of how unfazed he is by the ever-growing circus following this battle. After all, Verstappen was speaking after a race in which he was at fault for a collision that eliminated a rival in the full glare of F1's spotlight – but he didn't crack.

What we can learn from Verstappen's comments, those above spoken in Sochi, is how he tries to deal with a relatively high-pressure environment. There, he downplayed it and moved on. It's been a theme of his year, and this is mostly what is happening when he speaks about victory or defeat

against Hamilton not changing his life.

But Verstappen can get rattled when things go against him – see his terse responses to engineer Gianpiero Lambiase after Red Bull's long pitstop at Monza took him out of victory contention there, or indeed his explosive reply to questioning about further crashes with Hamilton following their Silverstone collision, an incident where the Briton was at fault. Verstappen cares – he's not just turning up, doing his best and hoping it all works out.

But there's risk to the stance he adopted in Turkey and it will be interesting to see if he sticks to the same line at Austin this weekend. His public utterances to questions about his run of mistakes in early 2018 suggest he won't back down in front of the media, but that year he clearly changed his approach and was all the better for it. The difference now is that the risk his position presents is an 'on-stage' one alone.

After hearing words that suggest he doesn't care, on some level something might drop, either subconsciously in Verstappen himself or somewhere in the Red Bull organisation. The opposite could be true, that Verstappen actually knows this approach is the best way to avoid slip-ups – by trying to keep everyone as relaxed as he is. But in most major sports organisations, public hyper-confidence in the outcome of a contest is the route taken. And it's one that works.

The final element at play is that Verstappen is also incorrect to suggest that defeat this season would change nothing for him. First of all, this *could* be his one shot. His supreme abilities make this unlikely, but you cannot rule out the unexpected. Then there's the 2022 rules reset, which many F1 insiders are suggesting could lead to one squad seizing a commanding advantage – the opposite of what the championship is going for with the new cars. It *could* be Red Bull. Or Mercedes – with the return to a ground-effect formula potentially able to give it an edge given its familiarity with a low-rake aero concept in recent years – or another team entirely.

The 2021 fight also hands Verstappen what could be a sole chance at making history: to be the driver that ends Hamilton's legendary run. This almost certainly doesn't matter to Verstappen. Or it is at least not something he'd admit to publicly, which makes it all the more odd that he's making statements that sound as if he's starting to accept an eventual defeat over this season's ultimate prize.

Verstappen has been the better of the two title contenders so far this year. Now he needs to lead Red Bull to glory with everything he's got, which surely includes not handing his rival even the hint of an off-track edge. ❧

➔ P16 HAMILTON VERSUS VERSTAPPEN



A Sutton certainty? Not quite

Ash Sutton's 32-point advantage puts him in the box seat ahead of this weekend's BTCC season finale at Brands Hatch, but there are four other drivers in contention

MARCUS SIMMONS

Right then. Who's going to win the British Touring Car Championship? The easy answer is that Ash Sutton will prevail this weekend around the glorious Brands Hatch Grand Prix Circuit. After all, he has a 32-point advantage — equivalent to a win, a fifth place and a random bonus point picked up somewhere — over closest rival Colin Turkington. Since the advent of the current scoring system a decade ago, the biggest swing against a pre-finale series leader has come in 2013, when Andrew Jordan's last-round wobble resulted in a 28-point swing in favour of Gordon Shedden, who came from 35 adrift to lose out by just seven. So... it's comfortable for Sutton, but what if early drama strikes the BMR and Laser Tools Racing boys with their Infiniti Q50?

"It's not over yet," says Sutton, who is interviewed in this issue (page 26). "It's a nice buffer, and we only lost four points [of his series lead] at Donington [in the penultimate round]. If it was going to be the same on the last weekend, then I'll be happy."

But there are four others in contention: Turkington, Tom Ingram, Jake Hill and Josh Cook. And here, I have to make an apology. After six seasons following the Formula 3 European Championship around the continent, I got used to a nice simple points system. Post-Donington, I erroneously excluded Cook from the list of contenders as I had incorrectly tallied those random bonus points mentioned in the opening gambit to this

"It's a big ask, and I'm definitely a rank outsider. But where there's hope it can still happen"

column. Therefore I thought there were 65 points available at Brands, when in fact there are 67, and Cook is 66 adrift of Sutton.

Not that the lofty Bath redhead would be kicking up a fuss, because that's not the style of one of the less attention-grabbing drivers in the paddock. But wow, does he grab attention on the track... Cook has been sensational at times this season in the BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R and, without the odd bit of bad luck or finger trouble — or struggle with ballast at Snetterton — he would be in with a shout of the title this weekend rather than the faintest of whispers. Watch him in fast corners such as Clervaux at Croft or the Old Hairpin at Donington, where he has this beautiful way of setting the Civic up on entry to drift through the turn, with a smidgeon of opposite lock yet not shedding any corner-exit speed. No wonder he's an absolute maestro at Thruxton. If you're

at Brands on Saturday and it's dry, go and see for yourself through the quick turns out the back.

For Cook, though, it's going to be tough to even improve on fifth in the points this weekend, let alone challenge for that title. But what of those who are closer to Sutton?

Turkington, of course, has seen it all before in the BTCC, as a veteran of four championship-winning seasons. He's never been subjected to a 32-point swing such as he needs to recover against Sutton, but he does know that the permutations can radically alter on the basis of a single push or shove on a Brands circuit that is renowned for bringing drama.

The Northern Irishman has not been immune to pressure this season — witness his accidental tap on Sutton in the Thruxton opener that brought him a penalty, his slip while leading from Sutton at Knockhill, and his spin at Donington that ironically brought him reversed-grid pole and a win in the final race — but the consensus is that he has been absolutely maximising the West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330i M Sport. Even though it's rear-wheel drive, that relatively stiff car hasn't carried the increased-for-2021 success ballast as well as the similar-format but soft-sprung Infiniti, and it also seems susceptible to losing grip when running in the pack. "It's a big ask, and I'm definitely a rank outsider," sighs Turkington. "But where there's hope it can still happen." How long can that hope last though? He carries a season-high 66kg of ballast into Brands, and he's never qualified in the top five this season at any track where he's had 57kg on board.

And what of the 'middle men', Tom Ingram in his Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N and Jake Hill at the wheel of his Motorbase-run MB Motorsport Ford Focus? Again, a lot depends on the ballast. The Hyundai's struggles with weight are well documented, and Ingram has sometimes been quite depressed at how lazy it feels at 66kg — his ballast for most of the season. He dropped to 39kg at Silverstone and whanged it onto the front row, but he has yet to experience the 57kg he will carry at Brands.

Hill and the Ford carried 48kg and 39kg remarkably well for most of the season, but 66kg at Silverstone and 57kg at Donington were steps too far, although he recovered remarkably well in the reversed-grid finales. Perversely, then, he's happy to be back down to fourth in the points and on 48kg at his home track, and feels that Turkington (13 points ahead) and Ingram (seven) are likely prey. "I'm a realistic person and the win is getting ever and ever more out of sight," says Hill. "You can't fault Ash — he's driven really well. But nevertheless I'm fighting for second — that's more than doable."

A third title it is for Sutton then. Well, probably! ❧

➔ P26 SUTTON'S RISE TO THE TOP

YOUR SAY

Have we completely exhausted the possibility of including the Miami round to have been scheduled when we go to Austin, Mexico City and Sao Paulo?

RICHARD PARKINSON

Back and forth across the Atlantic

I have just been looking at the provisional Formula 1 calendar for 2022. So, we have a race at Imola, followed by a trip across the pond to Miami and then back again for a race in Barcelona.

I am sure there are many factors, which the likes of me are not privy to, that this decision has been based on. However, have we completely exhausted the possibility of including the Miami round to have been scheduled when we go to Austin, Mexico City and Sao Paulo?

This idea, though, would make it a long time for the teams to be away from their base and homes.

Richard Parkinson

By email

Concern stirred by Qatar date

I read with concern in your magazine that Formula 1 is heading to Qatar. Excellent idea, what a good commercial decision. It is wonderful to see that newly found diversity in the F1 paddock is heading to the Middle East.

Just one moment, though; I identify as LGBTQ+. If I decide to go it will be a one-way ticket for me, do not pass go, go straight to jail. Oh well, I'll head to Saudi Arabia or UAE... oh damn, I can't.

Rachael Franklin

Nottinghamshire

Here's an idea for next season...

Anyone see a little similarity between Pau-Arnos and a certain circuit in Lincolnshire? Parkland, wide, sweeping corners and tight and hilly chicane. World Touring Car Cup at Cadwell Park in 2022 please! It would need a proper pit complex, though. How about it, Jonathan Palmer?

Tim Bailey

Kilbarchan

Making the most of local motorsport

Your correspondent Andrew Nimmo was absolutely right (7 October) urging the F1 promoters to expand the weekend to include elements of local motorsport such as MX-5s, Minis, etc.



The thought of Max Verstappen versus Lewis Hamilton in Caterhams really would be worth seeing and could be up there with Ayrton Senna versus Alain Prost in karts at Bercy all those years ago!

David McLaughlin

Nassau

The risk of being too clever

When involved in a tight title fight, McLaren acquired something of a habit for 'out-clevering' itself, China 2007 (above) being a prime example – is there a risk of Mercedes developing a similar trait?

Graeme Innes-Johnstone

Elland

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25

MAX VERSTAPPEN

262.5 points
17 F1 wins 0 world titles


Red Bull



WHO'S GOING TO WIN IT ALL?

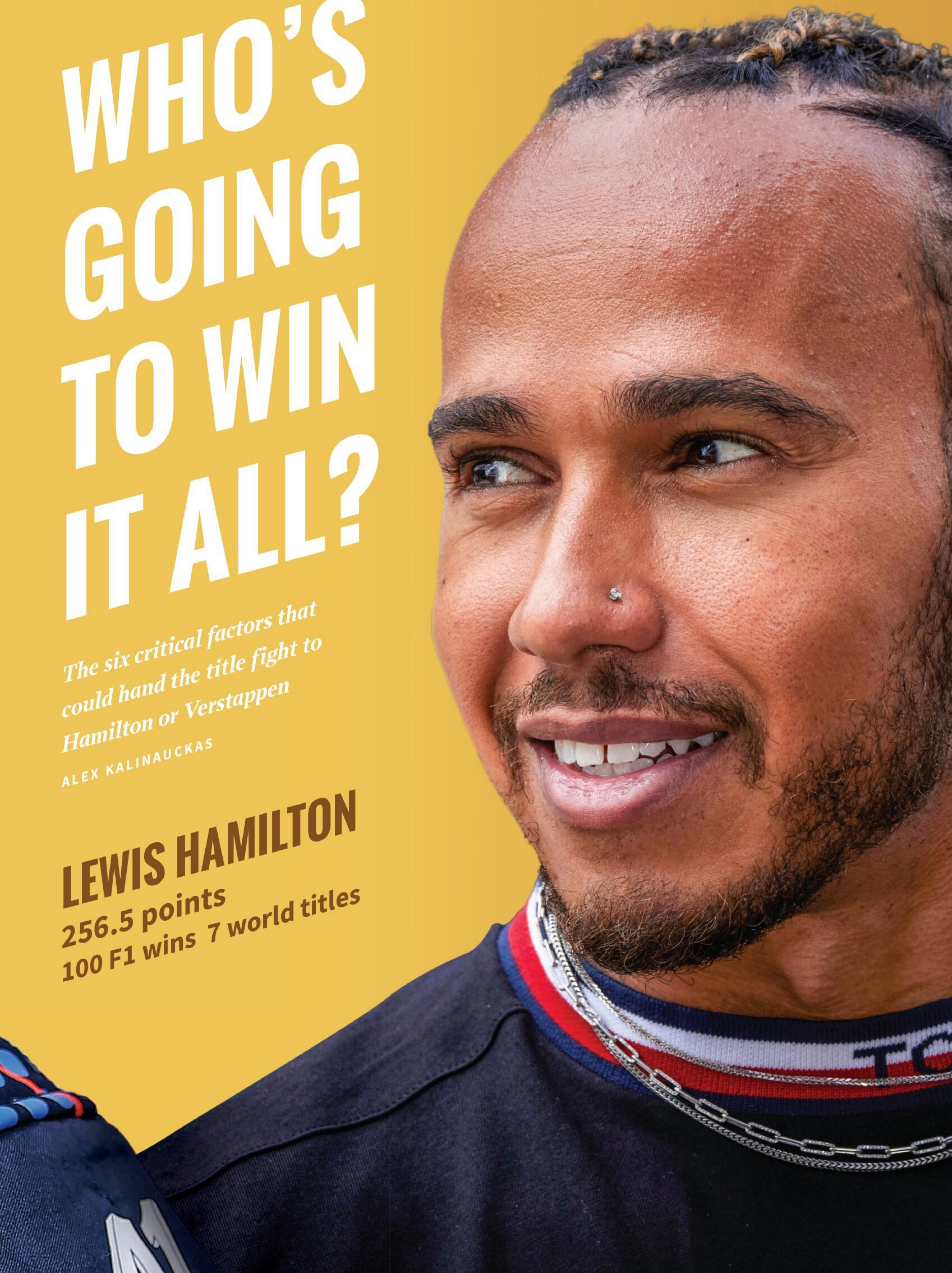
*The six critical factors that
could hand the title fight to
Hamilton or Verstappen*

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

LEWIS HAMILTON

256.5 points

100 F1 wins 7 world titles



There are six races remaining in the 2021 Formula 1 season. As things stand ahead of this weekend's United States Grand Prix, six points separate two of the championship's best drivers. Only one of them will win the title, and it'll either be a triumphant ending of an era or the glorious extension of one of F1's most legendary tales.

The battle between Red Bull and Mercedes, Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton, has ebbed and flowed throughout the season – rarely interrupted, rarely underwhelming. Looking back, the Bahrain season opener almost perfectly encapsulated the year's rivalry, as the duo went toe to toe on behalf of their respective squads, well clear of the rest, the outcome decided, thrillingly, by the barest of margins.

So, who will come out on top as the endgame approaches? Statistically F1's greatest ever driver?

Or the young pretender ready to topple the champion?

With the end in sight, we run down the critical factors that will most likely decide the ending of this F1 title fight for the ages.

1 THE FINAL UPDATES PUSH

There's quite the debate going on now, ahead of F1's rules revolution finally coming for 2022. Some are asking: is the championship on the verge of scoring an own goal by allowing the field to – inevitably – spread out again under new technical rules, just when the grid is at its closest since 2012 and two teams scrap it out for every race win? But that is a slightly disingenuous take given the current world title fight, as great as it is, is the result of a unique situation.

The cost-saving measures introduced to get the teams through the financial hit of the opening phase of the pandemic meant that 2021 is a season of making do with carryover car designs. Then there was the significant change to the rear floor rules, which hit Mercedes and fellow low-rake runner Aston Martin hardest. The 2021 rules allow for development of specific parts via a token system, but critically do permit continued aerodynamic development.

On this, Red Bull and Mercedes diverged. The former has brought a steady stream of updates – at virtually every round during the season's first half – while the latter has stuck to its tried-and-tested path of introducing major development steps at specific events. But Mercedes was adamant that this had a particular end point given the need to balance its 2022 car development programme, and so the bargeboards and sidepod changes introduced at July's British GP (above) were indeed its last big additions to the W12.

But things haven't stayed still as some expected. At Red Bull, the team has experimented considerably with rear-wing designs in the critical downforce/drag tradeoff (as Mercedes has too), which proved rather controversial in the opening rounds surrounding 'flexi-wing' complaints.

After Hamilton's pre-Silverstone comments that its final update package was "not going to close the gap enough",



FIAPOL



Red Bull was under the spotlight after the Spanish Grand Prix for 'flexi-wing' issues

Mercedes has continued to work on its current challenger. The team has been trialling a tweaked front-wing design in recent races – an attempt to gain an edge at the low-downforce tracks F1 will visit in Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Then there's Red Bull's theory that Mercedes has made a gain in the power stakes, something the Black Arrows squad rebuffs.

"Their straightline speed has taken a significant step recently and I think that whereas we could match them with smaller wings previously, now we can't get near," Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said last time out in Turkey.

Mercedes motorsport supremo Toto Wolff reckons it cannot be said "with an absolute conviction [that Mercedes now has a faster car]", but he believes his squad has "a really good package now" as it has "gradually understood the car better".



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motorsport
IMAGES

This is another theme of 2021 overall. Mercedes appeared well off the pace in pre-season testing, but engineered its way back into contention by fine-tuning the W12's package. Red Bull pulled a clear gap in the second part of the season's first half, as its wing work and the final Honda engine's potency gave Verstappen an edge that pulled him well ahead. Then came the Silverstone crash and Valtteri Bottas's bowling in Hungary, which added to the points Verstappen had lost in the Baku blowout. How the final respective tweaks to the RB16B and the W12 go down in the upcoming final chunk of the campaign will be critical to the season's ending.

"The regulations that came in at the beginning of the year created a situation where you run the car where we haven't been running in the last few years," said Wolff, also speaking after Bottas's Turkish GP win. "The more we run it, the more we drive, the more we could simulate situations, the better we have performed."

"We have pace and there are six plus one races to go [including the Brazil sprint], and where the car today is definitely in a better place than it was in the spring and the summer."

2 THE TEAMS NAILING SET-UPS

While Mercedes was able to work back towards Red Bull before the first race, it hasn't always got the best out of a car it has always been clear is a title contender, just not the all-conquering machine of a year ago. In Monaco and Baku, the team's struggles with tyre warm-up cost Hamilton considerably, although of course his second-start mistake was the main cause in not capitalising on Verstappen's Azerbaijan misfortune.

But not getting car set up correctly has also undone Red Bull. It had a balance problem in Hungary, not that it mattered given how the race that went to Esteban Ocon turned out, and most recently struggled to nail handling in Turkey. There, Horner admits his team was "out the window" from the off regarding the water-blasted, rougher track surface.

Mercedes hit the ground running thanks to its simulator preparation, but it also reckons it hit something of a sweet spot on the critical tyre-temperature operating window. This helped Hamilton rise from his grid penalty and Bottas defy Verstappen.

»



NO ADS.
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PERFORMANCE



Red Bull has had an edge over Merc at Interlagos in recent years



17 UNITED STATES



18 MEXICO



18 BRAZIL

“One of our engineers spoke about the tyres as being in a sort of Goldilocks place – not too hot, not too cold – on an asphalt that is particularly picky,” said Mercedes chief technical officer James Allison after the Turkey race.

“We knew we were very strong, but we also knew that the margins between this strength and being more average were quite slender. A few degrees here or there and we could have been out of the Goldilocks zone on the hot or the cold side. So, it was a very good performance. The car was very well balanced, we didn’t seem to suffer as much from the understeer that was fairly prevalent up and down the pitlane. But I don’t think you could read that automatically into the races to come.”

Getting the decisions that impact car handling and tyre operation right or wrong – for either team in the final rounds – is always vital. But it could just be that a championship depends upon it. Look at Mercedes in the 2020 Abu Dhabi season finale – its unexpected underperformance on the soft tyres in qualifying let in Verstappen, and he never looked back...

“A FEW DEGREES HERE OR THERE AND WE COULD HAVE BEEN OUT OF THE GOLDILOCKS ZONE, HOT OR COLD”



Verstappen took points lead in Turkey but RB16B was never in set-up window

ANDRE / MOTORSPORT IMAGES



MAUGER/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

**18 QATAR****18 SAUDI ARABIA****18 ABU DHABI**

3 THE UPCOMING CIRCUITS FAVOURING ONE OR THE OTHER

The last six races are intriguingly split in terms of which tracks may favour one or the other title-contending team. At Austin this weekend, F1 arrives at a track where Mercedes — and Hamilton in particular — has been dominant. But so far in 2021, Red Bull has been able to overturn the formbook at previous Mercedes strongholds Paul Ricard and Silverstone (considering Verstappen's sprint race win).

Mercedes now must hope it can succeed at two tracks where Red Bull has been the team to beat in recent years: Mexico City and Interlagos. In both races, but mainly the former, altitude is the critical factor as Mercedes' turbo does not operate as well as Honda's jet-engine-inspired design. Plus, thinner air means Red Bull doesn't have to worry as much as normal when it comes to trimming out drag.

Then there are two unknowns — F1's first forays to Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The first new event, the Losail track that ends 2021's final triple-header, is surely likely to play to Mercedes' strengths given it's a MotoGP venue with little super-high-speed stuff. Yet the latter may be more likely to favour Red Bull given its dominance on a similar fast street-circuit setting in Baku. But that was back in June and, as we've covered, updates could of course change all of this...

F1 2021 WINS SO FAR

DRIVER	WINS
Verstappen	7
Hamilton	5
Bottas	1
Perez	1
Ricciardo	1
Ocon	1

4 GETTING CRITICAL STRATEGY CALLS RIGHT

Red Bull got the maximum result it could in Turkey after it couldn't hold onto Mercedes thanks to its set-up deficit, but its double podium behind Bottas was in real danger. First, Hamilton could have pulled off a stunning win had conditions improved as he was hoping. But while that was always a long shot — just as holding off Sergio Perez and Charles Leclerc on a no-stopper would have been — if he had pitted when Bottas and Verstappen did (or just after) then there's every chance he'd have got through the intermediate >>

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Both Hamilton and Wolff have downplayed the on-air spat during the Turkish GP

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tyre's graining phase and climbed to third.

Mercedes knows with hindsight's benefit that a higher result than fifth was possible, even if it also backs its calls to try to get an even better result — as Verstappen did during his own engine-change grid-penalty recovery in the Russian GP.

"The whole season swings back and forth," Wolff said of Hamilton's Istanbul Park strategy, where both team and driver sought to downplay the fractious radio disagreement that played out, all said in an intense racing scenario and within the wider context of a pressured title fight. "This one was a very close call. We decided for one thing, and it went wrong. At the end we've lost eight points from Red Bull from a grid penalty, and Red Bull [in Russia] were happy with a seven-point loss. So, it's going to be very tight until the end. DNFs are going to make a big difference."

Red Bull has had pitstops go wrong since the technical directive to reduce automation in procedures was introduced at Spa. This was very costly to Verstappen as he chased Daniel Ricciardo at Monza,

but the team bounced back well in Turkey. It also committed to the best strategy in changing inters when it did, even if that allowed Bottas to simply cover it and defend the race lead.

There's definitely too much being made of the Turkish GP radio exchange between Hamilton and Mercedes, but that still represents a tiny seed of doubt that neither needs at this crucial moment.

And then there's the reliability factor Wolff mentions. The question is: which team has got it right, and will adding those extra parts to their overall engine pools be enough when parts are being pushed harder for longer than ever before? It's a record-breaking year, and in a two-horse race compromises with lower engine modes can't be made, as Mercedes could afford to do in 2020.

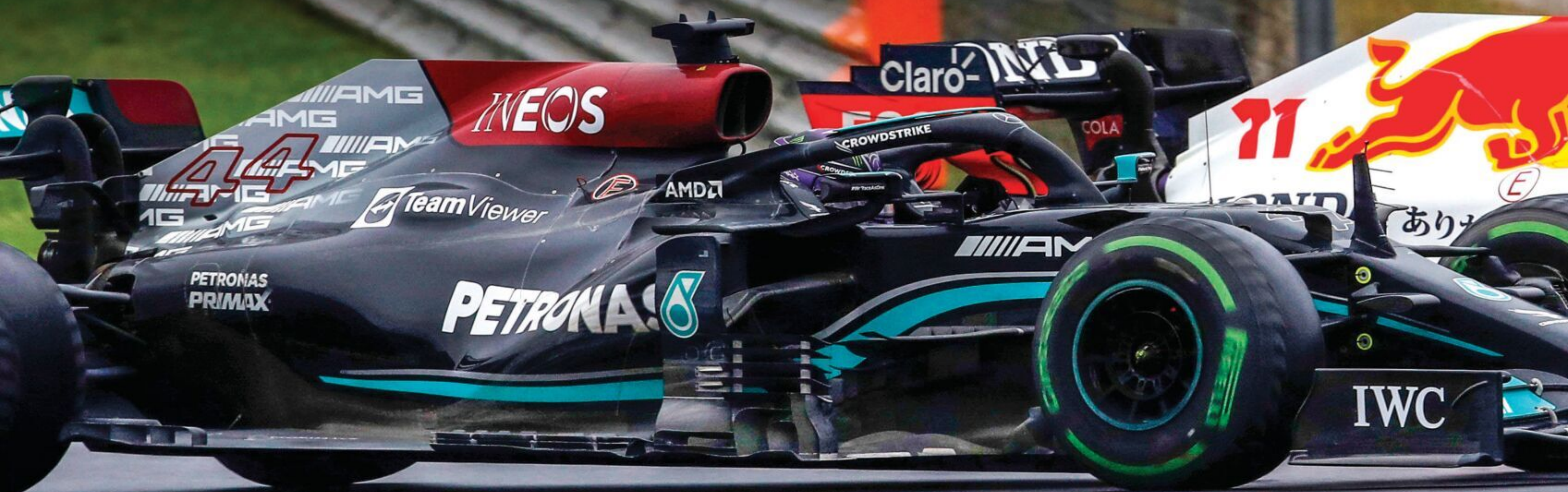
Honda is adamant that Verstappen can now see the season out with no further grid penalties, but Mercedes has considerable concerns. There have been repeat pneumatic pressure problems at customer squad Williams, while the all-new engine that Bottas took at Monza had to be sent

back to Brixworth to be checked after an issue was detected following practice in Russia. Mercedes is monitoring "unusual noises", says Wolff, on its internal combustion engines, and so Hamilton may yet need another one to get through to the Abu Dhabi finale. The small silver lining is that a fifth ICE would only mean a five-place grid drop. Mercedes simply cannot afford another fiery Malaysia malady, such as arguably cost Hamilton the 2016 title to Nico Rosberg.

"It's tricky when you start to push the boundaries with power-unit performance," says Wolff. "At a certain stage you will experience some obstacles. Our power units have been the most reliable since the introduction of the hybrid engines in 2014.

"Because these boundaries are being pushed, we have seen examples of, let's say, unusual noises within the combustion engine that aren't completely understood yet and therefore caused some trouble in the past. We had engines that basically failed, and now it's about containing the problem, because in that phase [the end of a season], redesigning parts is not something you would tackle."

"HIS DEFENCE WITH LEWIS WAS EXACTLY WHAT WE'D EXPECT. IT'S BEEN COMING FOR A LITTLE WHILE"



5 THE TEAM-MATE FACTOR

Perez finally backed up Verstappen in Turkey with his incredible defence against Hamilton, but he needs to be right with his team-mate in every qualifying session and race from now on. Yes, the Mexican has been unlucky in the events leading up to Istanbul Park, but he's also not helped himself by repeatedly qualifying down the order.

The AlphaTauri drivers could also be a helpful factor for Red Bull, with Yuki Tsunoda driving with Verstappen's title push in mind against Hamilton last time out. This was because he wants "Max to win in the last year of Honda, and for Red Bull as well", which meant he "tried to hold Lewis up as much as possible".

At Mercedes, not only has Bottas scored 69% of Hamilton's points total (versus Perez's 51% of Verstappen's haul) this season but, since it was announced that he would be replaced by George Russell for 2022, the soon-to-be-Alfa Romeo (or possibly Andretti) driver has the most points of any racer. The Finn has spoken about Mercedes' driver line-up decision "relaxing" him since he no longer has to think about off-track stuff. Bottas can be counted on to back up Hamilton as well as he ever has, with Wolff reckoning his Turkey redemption win "may not be his last this season".

Verstappen really needs Perez to take points off Hamilton to aid his cause. "His defence with Lewis [in Istanbul] was exactly what we would expect," Horner says of Perez. "It's been coming for a little while, but I think this is a great shot of confidence for him as we're now approaching the very important part of the championship."



6 TITLE-FIGHT EXPERIENCE

This is possibly the most intriguing factor at play over the title run-in — how will the contenders handle the pressure best? Both have made mistakes. But, other than being more at fault for the dramatic Monza crash, Verstappen's errors have been smaller, and it can be argued that Hamilton's 2021 mistakes (the Imola off, Baku, clipping the pitlane wall in Sochi qualifying) have been bigger and highly unusual unforced errors compared to his previously bulletproof overall displays.

Again, that's a sign of how hard this title battle is — and it's the same with the pitstops/strategy/set-up errors that have crept in at both squads. But Hamilton can at least fall back

on the seven world titles he's already won and recall his 2018 triumph in particular — he and Mercedes beat the Ferrari/Sebastian Vettel package that had been faster for much of that campaign. When it came to making key overtaking moves in the wet Turkey race, he approached these with the championship firmly in mind. It was his approach from the start, but could be seen best at the end of that thrilling battle with Perez.

"I don't feel any pressure," Hamilton said after losing the title lead to Verstappen last time out — the fifth time the points lead has changed hands in 2021. "I'm very chilled. I don't like losing points, but that's just the way it is."

Verstappen, meanwhile, without a single car-racing title to his name, is unproven. While he's been supremely fast this year, there have been rash moments — most notably after that long pitstop had dropped him out of the lead battle and into Hamilton's orbit at Monza. He appears to be very relaxed, but comments he made in Turkey sounded alarmingly

like he's resigned to defeat, even after his second place to Bottas had edged him back ahead. "They were definitely quicker," Verstappen concluded. "We just didn't get it together and also in the wet they seemed to have a bit of the edge as well. I definitely do think they probably stepped it up a bit more. Even with the points, it's not going to be easy, but so far we've had a really good year so it's not going to change the world for me if we finish first or second at the end of the day."

"But I'm always going to give my best and we'll see again in Austin how it's going to go. We won't give up, we'll always try to do the best we can and hopefully, of course, at the end of the championship it's going to be enough. But if it isn't, I'm not going to sleep less."

Now, this isn't necessarily Carlos Reutemann 1981 territory just yet — although that is a prescient example of how a driver downplaying their chances can play out badly — but it perhaps reflects the reality of the title fight's balance. And it isn't overwhelmingly positive for Red Bull.

Since that Silverstone update, Mercedes has been much improved. While Verstappen scored a famous home win at Zandvoort and stole a march in the Spa farce thanks to his brilliant pole, Hamilton's team has either been ahead or at least level-pegging with Red Bull. There have been no more Austrian GP-like walkovers from Verstappen, while the layouts of the six tracks F1 has visited after Silverstone have swung things around and often away from the W12s. Mercedes also squandered its considerable advantage at Monza.

That's not to say that the 2021 title race is now a foregone conclusion — far from it. In fact, Hamilton's 2018 triumph should provide just as much inspiration to Verstappen as it does for the Briton. That is, really, a wonderful conclusion for where things stand right now: that one of F1's two top drivers could be on the verge of achieving something truly special. The winner will still need the standout factors to go their way, but one of these true greats can make the ultimate difference. ❧



22 RACES FOR 2022

While Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton are battling to the wire for championship victory in Formula 1, we're already looking ahead to what's in store for 2022.

With international travel back on the cards and circuits welcoming fans from across the globe back into their grandstands, we're getting you ready for a huge year of racing.

As millions of racing fans look to get back to their first race in years, and the action on track poised to be completely shaken up, here are our top 22 picks for races you should be looking at to get you back on track in 2022.

Austria

Dutch fans sent into raptures at party central of the racing calendar.

Canada

Canadian fans will flock to bustling Montreal for return of racing.



Austin

COTA provides American fans with the best views of racing of any track on the calendar.

Spain

Varied circuit proves challenge for world's greatest drivers.

Miami

The Magic City is poised to host lively maiden race around Hard Rock Stadium.

Mexico

Celebrate Día de los Muertos with traditional on-circuit festival parade before intense racing.

Brazil

Charismatic Interlagos is always a racing highlight of the year.



Netherlands

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THE MAKING OF ASH SUTTON

He's on the verge of being crowned a three-time champion of the BTCC; he seems to have it all. But life hasn't always been straightforward for this superstar of touring cars

MARCUS SIMMONS

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP  **motorsport**
IMAGES

Judder-judder-judder. The left-rear suspension of this BMW M2 Competition, a passenger wagon made available for the day by the British Racing Drivers' Club, literally has nothing more to give. British Touring Car Championship mega-talent Ash Sutton is at the wheel, beaming and laughing amid armfuls of opposite lock. The addition of a middle-aged Autosport man (85kg-plus at last weigh-in) alongside him means he's carrying even more ballast than the regulation maximum 75kg success weight he usually has aboard his Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50, and even rear-wheel-drive sorcerer Sutton can't override the basic laws of physics and road-car design. We wave goodbye to any chance of ever seeing the inside of Silverstone's Luffield turn again, and that left-rear only grips up again once we're in a straight line and heading down towards Woodcote.

We're inches from the rear bumper of an identical M2, driven by Ben Tuck, the amiable 'expat' who's been making a very good name for himself this season in GT3 BMW machinery on the Nurburgring Nordschleife. The lads are having a ball, their passengers too. It's a proper hoonathon.

Half an hour or so before this, Sutton is in relaxed form amid warm autumn sunshine as he chats with us at a wooden table outside the Silverstone paddock cafe. So absorbed is he in his work to win another BTCC title that he can be tough to pin down in the paddock. And so busy is he during the week on his new-but-booming Puresims simulator business that he can be tough to pin down on the phone too. But today is different. The BRDC SuperStars programme has made him available to a select few media; there's no pressure, no set-up to chase, no sim rig to build, no rush, no distractions.



Sutton is a rear-wheel-drive maestro. He's also quite handy with left-wheel drive

“WE ACTUALLY REALISED FORMULA VEE WAS CHEAPER THAN KARTING; IT WAS A GOOD WAY TO LEARN THE TRACKS”

It's incredible to think that he's still only 27, in just his sixth year of BTCC competition, yet in a few days' time likely to become crowned champion of the UK's most prestigious championship for a third time. Even more remarkable to put that in the context of what Sutton and his family faced a decade ago...

Sutton had begun car racing in the clubbie environs of Formula Vee at the age of 16: “We actually realised it was cheaper than karting at the time; it was a good way to learn the tracks and get our eye in.” After a financially foiled bid to move onto the BTCC support package in 2011 in the Renault Clio Cup, the family set their sights lower and bought a car for the Ford Fiesta championship. Two rounds into the season, Sutton – the proud new owner of a full >>



driving licence — climbed into his little Citroen road car, with one of his mates coming along for the ride.

“I was 17, just a normal teenager on the roads...” he reflects. “Got caught out to be fair; I thought I knew the road better than I did. I was driving obviously at the speed limit — near the top end of it of course! But I thought I was on a different part of the road than I was, came across a T-junction and had a big accident. I punctured kidneys and things like that, which put a complete grinding halt on anything. I was told that I couldn’t race, the doctor said that I’d be stupid trying to get myself back in a race car or even a kart — my kidneys wouldn’t be able to take it.

“When I had the accident I was actually fine straight after. The issues started to occur a couple of weeks after — passing blood and things like that — and that was a bit of a wake-up call to how you should respect the roads. But still, laying in a hospital bed being told you’re not actually able to race, that was where it hit home. That had ruined everything I wanted to achieve. I took the brunt of the impact — it was driver-side [his friend was fine]. Definitely not my proudest moment!

“We went through the horrible stage of recovery process. The kidney is one of the organs that can self-heal, so they said, ‘Right, we’ll keep doing monthly check-ups’. That went on for nine to 12 months, and then they realised it was just deteriorating. I had to have an operation to take away the bad part of the kidney and reconfigure it, if that makes sense, and start that whole process again. It was a good couple of years before I could think of getting back in a car or a kart.”

Sutton’s comeback came in British Formula Ford in 2014, where he was spotted by BTCC racer and BMR Racing supremo Warren Scott and persuaded to switch back to tin-tops in the Clio Cup for 2015. Scott has managed and guided Sutton’s career ever since. There’s a common school of thought that things happen for a reason. Put it to Sutton that, had the accident not delayed his racing career so that he might not have come onto Scott’s radar at that crucial juncture, and he becomes animated.

“I very much agree with you: things *do* happen for a reason. What we also found out was my kidneys weren’t quite formed properly when I was born, which we never knew about, and the incident highlighted that. That could have affected me later in life. I got back into racing, and my first proper year back in 2014 I bumped into Warren, and without what he’s done for me, and where he’s put me and the journey we’ve had together, I wouldn’t be sat here now with two BTCC championships to my name, a Clio championship to my name.

“The deal that Warren put in place was two years in Clios, try and win that, and then we would look at the touring car thing, but that came around a year sooner...”

Sutton had caused a problem by winning the Clio crown as a rookie. There was no point hanging around in the little French hatchbacks, and there was no place in BMR’s Subaru BTCC line-up, but Scott had a Plan B for 2016. “It kind of happened a little bit



Sutton made up for poor start to 2017



First BTCC pole came on his second outing in 2016 with Triple Eight MG

“WE CLICK. HE’S NOT JUST MY ENGINEER AT THE END OF THE DAY; I LOOK AT HIM AS A FRIEND”

quicker than probably he wanted, and it was partly my fault!” laughs Sutton. “There were talks of trying to get me in a Subaru, but we all discussed it probably wasn’t the right thing for my first year in British Touring Cars. He was going through negotiations with Ian Harrison at Triple Eight [to buy the team], and it would seem just a perfect fit to put me in that as a learning year, get my eye in, and get my head around it.”

Triple Eight founder Harrison stayed on to run the squad of MG6s, where Sutton was partnered by second-year BTCC racer Josh Cook. The two have been firm friends ever since. Sutton took a stunning pole second time out at Donington, repeated it later in the year at Silverstone, and scored his maiden BTCC win at Croft. But he needed calming down. The same thing happened shortly into the following season, 2017, by which time Sutton was at the wheel of a BMR Subaru alongside his teenage idol Jason Plato. This time, it was BMR’s then-technical chief Carl Faux who had to sit the fiery youngster down.

“Carl was someone that I didn’t really know too much about,” recalls Sutton. “I had my engineer Dan Millard, and it became very apparent to me what Carl’s potential was. And suddenly my respect, from being the new kid, that I gained for him was massive, so when he pulled me aside and said, ‘Right, you need to sort your shit out’, it kind of sunk in and that’s what changed me.

“Looking back, there’s a key element of me where Ian Harrison had a big part as well in 2016. He had to really sit me down as well and go, ‘Right, we need to restructure how you approach things’, and that’s what changed the back half of my 2016. And I needed that chat again in a different manner with Carl. Once we got that under our belt and we got over our gremlins with the Subaru

Maiden BTCC title was collected in 2017 aboard BMR Subaru Levorg – his second season in the series...



at the start of the year, it was completely different.

"It was never expected that we were going to be where we ended up, but it was very clear from the get-go that he wanted to win that championship and he believed in me, which gave me the confidence I needed. For Carl to sit there at round four and tell me we're going to win that championship, bearing in mind I was alongside Jason, he put that on my lap and said, 'Right, that's yours for the taking – we've got to work for this, you can still do it'. Despite where we were in the standings, that just gave me self-belief. That was a core moment."

The rest is history. Sutton did indeed take that title, before Faux headed off to Australia to work as an engineer for the Walkinshaw Andretti United Supercars team. In March 2018, the newly crowned BTCC champion went down under for a test in WAU's Holden Commodore at Winton. Scott tried to get him into the team for 2019, but the collapse of a sponsor put paid to that. Sutton, therefore, was left to battle in the BTCC, where series organiser TOCA imposed some handicaps on the Subaru to mitigate what was argued to be an advantageous boxer-engine format. "They're doing a job," sighs Sutton philosophically. "There was obviously this stigma around the Subaru. We disagreed with it; you're always going to have this in any form of racing. But yeah, we tried to do it again in 2018, but from Knockhill onwards I felt like we were just on the back foot. 2019 was a hard year mentally for me – you're doing everything you can and no results were being delivered."

Scott was fed up with the uphill battle, so for 2020 he effectively merged BMR with the Laser Tools Racing squad of Aiden Moffat's father Bob. Now Sutton had his hands on a new weapon: the Infiniti Q50 that the Scottish operation had revived in the summer of 2019. Antonio Carrozza, who had replaced the departing Millard as



...where Sutton got to partner Jason Plato

Sutton's engineer for 2019, carried out a redesign on the Japanese machine, and his BMR colleagues would run Sutton while the LTR staff remained with Moffat.

Despite virtually no pre-season testing, owing to the COVID crisis, Sutton emerged on top of a fierce title fight with BMW star Colin Turkington. With more development on the Infiniti for 2021, a third crown looks likely this weekend. Key to this is the relationship between Sutton and Carrozza. There are numerous intriguing stories swirling regarding Sutton's BTCC programme in 2022, but there's one thing he's sure of: "We've both agreed that we wouldn't want to work with anyone else. Tony wants to always work with me; I want to always work with him. He fills me with confidence, and he likes the way I approach things and my feedback. We click. He's not just my engineer at the end of the day; I look at him as a friend, like my brother to some extent."

Part of this is Sutton's interest in the mechanical side of the sport. His father's business is in construction and carpentry, and >>



the practical genes were handed down. You'll often spot him in the garage, debriefing there with Carrozza and the mechanics rather than in an office in the truck. "I think that stems from my karting," he explains. "It was very much dad-and-lad racing. I didn't have any mechanics or big teams behind me, so I got mechanically involved in my karting career, and that just always rolled over. I've always had a big interest in cars. My dad had old classics that we'd pull apart and rebuild together. When it comes to building a new car, I just love to be in the nitty gritty of it."

Including the Infiniti? "Yeah, and even listening in on when they were building the Subarus and watching that build process. That just really excites me, watching it go from just a road car to a race car and seeing that process and what goes on behind the scenes."

"I just like being around the cars, with my number one and two mechanics, tyre guys, because we're a team at the end of the day, and if you isolate yourself away you don't get these bonds and the relationships. I can sit there and some information I will pass straight to Tony, and we'll be talking about the balance of the car and how we can adapt it. But in terms of if there's an alignment slightly out, or the brake pedal didn't feel quite right and needed bleeding, I would bypass Tony straight away and tell my number one. That's because we all have that trust in each other. I like having that involvement within the team that I can feed that information direct rather than through people."

If that sounds down-to-earth, so is his attitude towards racing. Sutton is firmly in the hard-but-fair camp, and doesn't seem to get as upset as many of his peers when it comes to the pushing and shoving that's part and parcel of the BTCC. Put this to him and he smiles, but admits that he can get mad...

"A couple of times, in the heat of the moment, you're on the radio and you're screaming and shouting down the radio, and poor old Tony probably takes the brunt of that," he says. "But touring cars have been known for that for years. It's a TV show, and realistically if you just have a little bit of door-to-door contact that's fine. If



you've lost a handful of places, like mine and Jason's incident at Snetterton [in 2019], that revved me up, that rubbed my back up the wrong way. There was one with Jake Hill in the Subaru, where I got taken out because of an incident with him. Those incidents really sort of nark me, shall we say."

And there have been spins caused by rear contact from Turkington in the first race of two successive seasons: "The Donington one from 2020 I was on the limiter. I was going, 'That Colin Turkington's taken me out!' OK, that one was a bit of a concertina effect, but the Thruxton one at the start of this year... To be fair I actually was quite calm about that one, because I didn't know the full story. I was pretty much three quarters of the way around the corner and still got hit, so I didn't know if someone was out of control."

"I don't mind the door-to-door squeezing each other. As long as there's always a car width left, that's absolutely fine by me, but when people drive you off the track and you lose places, that's when it starts peeing me off. I've always been known as a hard racer, I'd



“I WAS MORE EXCITED ABOUT HANGING AROUND WITH JASON PLATO OR MATT NEAL THAN BEING IN AN F1 CAR”



Manager Scott (left) and engineer Carrozza both play crucial roles



2021: race one, lap one; spun out by Turkington

like to think I'm fair, I'd like to think I've calmed down a little bit as the years go by and think about it a little bit more."

That's been allied with a more risk-averse approach in 2021. "Yeah, 100%," Sutton agrees. "I think the key element of why I am the way I am... When

you're bouncing championships down between me and Colin all the time, there was a part of me where I needed sometimes to take the risk to get the leg up and try and get a few more points above Colin, whereas now we've had a good run of points. When you enter a weekend leading the points, you then just have to really go for damage-limitation [to prepare] for race three. It's purely based on where your rivals are."

Sutton illustrates this with the second Thruxton event of 2021, where his Infiniti sat behind the fourth-placed Toyota of Rory Butcher in race one. "If Tom [Ingram] was in front of me, and Rory was the one that was breaking us up and he was in between, I probably would have approached that slightly differently," he points out. "But the fact that Tom and Colin were behind me in race one, I didn't need to take those risks. I was already outscoring them, it was most likely I was going to outscore them in the next race as well, and it allowed me then to bite the bullet for race three."

To that searing speed and extraordinary car control, then, you can add a tactical guile reminiscent of Turkington at his best. Sutton is the complete package. It's easy to wonder whether such a talent can remain within these shores when he's still only 27... It's not widely known that mentor Scott made another attempt to get his charge into the Aussie scene for 2021, but that was probably not going to be the ideal time bearing in mind the nation's strict handling of the COVID crisis. "I just want to be able to go and see if they're really

that hard to get your teeth dug into," he states. "It's become quite common that a Brit's struggled to dial themselves in fully out there, so I'd like

to be the one who conquers that." He also had a development programme on Volkswagen's TCR project, before the marque withdrew from the worldwide tin-top category.

But fear not, folks. The BTCC is where Sutton will be in 2022, in all likelihood as a three-time champion. It's where he dreamed of being since an epiphanic moment at the age of 13. "I can remember when I'd first won a British championship in karting in 2007, and there [at the presentation] was Lewis Hamilton, just off the back of his very successful year [his debut F1 season], and there was Jason Plato, again off the back of his [where he'd narrowly lost out on the BTCC title]. I was like, 'I've got two iconic people here in my eyes, and unfortunately as much as I look up to Lewis, and what he's achieved is fantastic, I want to go down that touring car thing.' I was more excited about hanging around with someone like Jason and Matt Neal and people like that than being in an F1 car. It was an odd feeling. I think that's because of how I drive and my style of racing. I like being door to door with someone – not necessarily take people out, but elbows-out, rough-and-tough racing."

Half a lifetime later, we're over to the Silverstone garage to climb aboard that M2. The BRDC calls him a SuperStar. Yet to those of us who get their kicks from marvelling at talent, he's an all-time touring car great who already deserves to be spoken of in the same breath as Alain Menu, Laurent Aiello, Rickard Rydell, Steve Soper, Andy Rouse... and, indeed, Jason Plato. ✎

50 years on... Remembering Jo Siffert

*Half a century ago this Sunday, motorsport lost one of its finest drivers.
Here's the story of Switzerland's hard charger*

KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport
IMAGES**

“As soon as the race ended I ran through the tunnel into the pitlane. I saw Rob Walker walking towards me with tears down his face.”

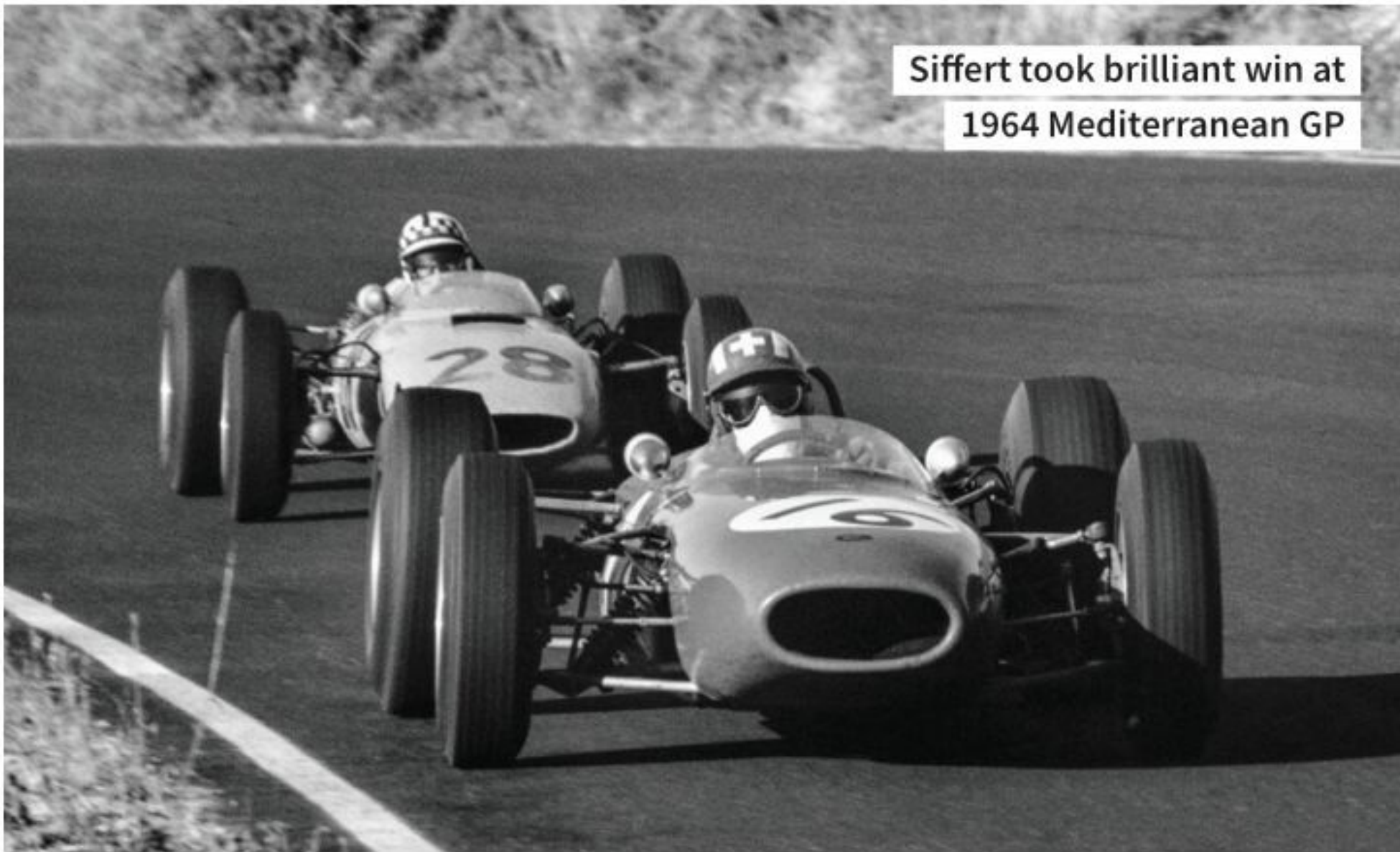
Former Autosport editor Simon Taylor was at the 1971 World Championship Victory Race at Brands Hatch when Jo Siffert was killed. Although the 35-year-old Swiss was a BRM driver, Taylor knew that there was a special relationship between Siffert and the successful privateer team boss.

“I didn’t know ‘Seppi’, as everyone called him, but people who knew him well adored him,” adds Taylor. “Rob was able, because he was an extraordinarily nice man, to have wonderful relationships with his drivers. But with Siffert there was real affection. It was a very special relationship.”

Siffert had driven for Walker’s team between 1965 and 1969, and it was perhaps fitting that he should forge his Formula 1 career as part of a privateer squad, given his own hard work to get into motorsport.

Although born into a family with a small dairy business, times were invariably tough for the young Siffert, born in Fribourg on 7 July 1936. Siffert found many ways to make extra money, including collecting old paper to sell, cleaning bicycles, being a rag merchant and – having overheard a conversation between two soldiers in a cafe – digging up spent cartridges to sell on.

He was not particularly successful at school, a situation not helped by a near-fatal bout of diphtheria when he was seven, but he had a knack for doing deals and persuading people to help him.



A trip to the 1948 Grand Prix of Europe at Berne fired his motorsport interest. And he settled on his patriotic helmet design early on, inspired by Benoit Musy, a driver also from Fribourg who had impressed Siffert in a modified sportscar race at Berne.

As a child, Siffert showed an affinity with wheeled transport, driving the family car around the farm, and first started competing in motorcycle races. He proved rapid and became a national champion, but was also hard on the equipment and garnered a reputation as a risk-taker following several scrapes.

After becoming an apprentice at the Frangi coachbuilding works, Siffert started a road-car business that helped him fund his fledgling career. Initially he raced a Formula Junior Stanguellini in 1960 and then a Lotus 18 the following year. Wins came quickly and he took the 1961 European Formula Junior title, shared with Tony Maggs.

Remarkably, he then stepped up into F1 in 1962. For the next three seasons he would appear in many F1 races, initially for Ecurie Nationale Suisse and then Ecurie Filipinetti before going it alone.

He showed promise, most notably beating reigning world champion Jim Clark in the sensational 1964 Mediterranean GP at Enna-Pergusa, but joining Walker’s team was the key step. Siffert’s first world championship F1 podium came as early as the 1964 United States GP, a race of attrition in which he’d had to finish the race stuck in fifth gear, and more strong drives in 1965 cemented his place in the team. That was crucial when Walker had to downsize to one car for the 1966 season, Siffert being selected over veteran Jo Bonnier.

Siffert remained an underdog in F1 for several seasons, but it was a different matter in sportscars, where he attracted the attention of Porsche. As the banning of the big bangers made the German firm consistent overall contenders, Siffert became its lead driver. And in 1969 he formed one of the great partnerships, alongside Brian Redman, the duo sweeping to five wins in the first nine world championship races before Siffert took the fearsome 917’s first major victory with Kurt Ahrens Jr at the Osterreichring.

“Seppi was fun-loving, business-minded and of course, very quick,” recalls Redman, now 84. >>

JO SIFFERT World sportscar championship wins		
EVENT	CAR	CO-DRIVER(S)
1968 Daytona 24 Hours	Porsche 907 LH	Vic Elford/Jochen Neerpasch/ Rolf Stommelen/Hans Herrmann
1968 Sebring 12 Hours	Porsche 907	Hans Herrmann
1968 Nurburgring 1000Km	Porsche 908 Coupe	Vic Elford
1968 Zeltweg 500Km	Porsche 908 Coupe	N/A
1969 BOAC 500, Brands Hatch	Porsche 908/2	Brian Redman
1969 Monza 1000Km	Porsche 908 Coupe	Brian Redman
1969 Spa 1000Km	Porsche 908 Coupe	Brian Redman
1969 Nurburgring 1000Km	Porsche 908/2	Brian Redman
1969 Watkins Glen 6 Hours	Porsche 908/2 Flunder	Brian Redman
1969 Osterreichring 1000Km	Porsche 917	Kurt Ahrens Jr
1970 Targa Florio	Porsche 908/3	Brian Redman
1970 Spa 1000Km	Porsche 917K	Brian Redman
1970 Osterreichring 1000Km	Porsche 917K	Brian Redman
1971 Buenos Aires 1000Km	Porsche 917K	Derek Bell



Siffert's distinctive helmet design was inspired by another racer from Fribourg

WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
F1 STATS96
STARTS2
WINS2
POLES4
FASTEST
LAPSSiffert took a famous
win in 1968 British GP
with Walker's Lotus 49B

SCHLEGELMILCH

"If I don't win, Porsche doesn't win either," Siffert is reported to have said after Jacky Ickx's late defeat of Hans Herrmann at Le Mans in 1969. Porsche must have felt that he had a point, since it funded his move to the March F1 team for 1970 to prevent him joining Ferrari. It was a development Walker supported, even though it meant losing the driver who had given him his ninth – and final – world championship race victory in the 1968 British GP.

Walker's purchase of a Lotus 49 had helped make the spectacular Siffert a frontrunner in F1. As well as the Brands Hatch victory, he had starred at the Mexico City finale, then added podiums at Monaco and Zandvoort the following year. The former came despite the camshaft being broken at one end, putting one of the two valves for the last cylinder out of action, while the latter came after a charge from 10th on the grid.

So Siffert started 1970 as a GP winner, one of the world's leading sportscar drivers, and with Porsche and March deals. But the season didn't entirely go to plan.

The March 701 was not particularly brilliant – even Jackie Stewart would only win one world championship race in it – and the situation with Porsche got complicated. The JW Automotive Engineering team had taken over the running of the manufacturer's world sportscar project. Siffert and Redman were 'Porsche's' drivers, while Pedro Rodriguez and Leo Kinnunen were 'JWA's'. A fierce rivalry with Rodriguez began, one in which Siffert was on the losing side more often than he would have liked.

Neither were great test drivers; both were tough racers. They'd battled hard at the Spa 1000Km in 1969, when Rodriguez was a Ferrari driver, and at the same race in 1970 they touched through Eau Rouge at the start disputing the lead. Thanks to Redman's pace and trouble for the Rodriguez/Kinnunen car, Siffert won, but it was usually Rodriguez who did the winning in the 917.

"Pedro and Joseph got on perfectly well but not for too long; pointed in the same direction their characters were too strongly defined for them ever to be real friends," reckoned Siffert's mate and assistant Jacques Deschenaux in his 1972 book *Jo Siffert*. "It was because the qualities of the Mexican driver were so similar to his own that Pedro was his great rival."

Walker and Siffert
formed a strong bond

SCHLEGELMILCH

The final success: Siffert
leads the field at the start
of the 1971 Austrian GP

BRM designer Tony Southgate on the cause of Siffert's fatal crash

"I was on holiday in Tenerife when Seppi was killed. On my return, I inspected the charred remains of the car in the factory. We hadn't had any trouble with the car or funny handling. We'd left all the problems behind, so I was baffled.

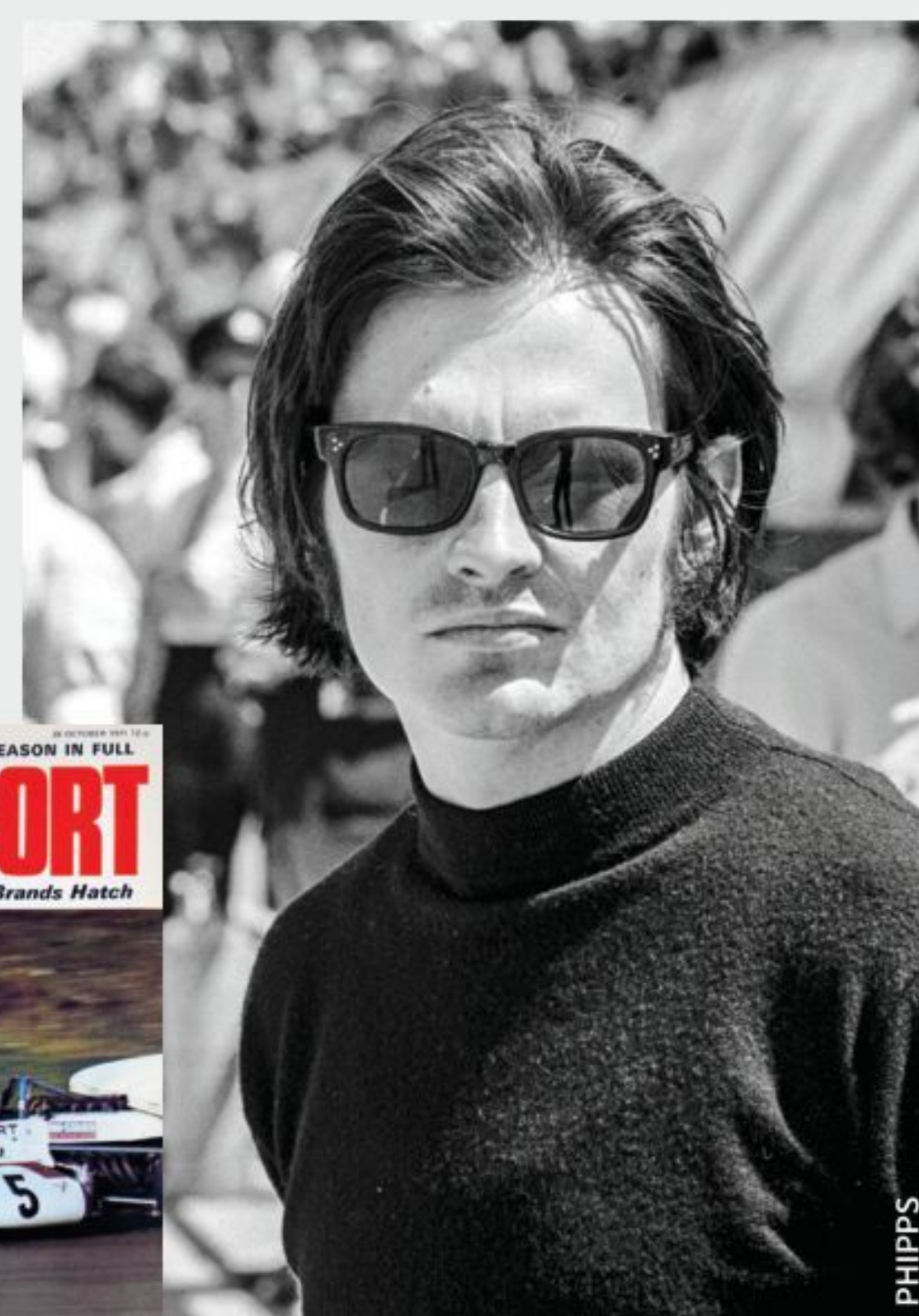
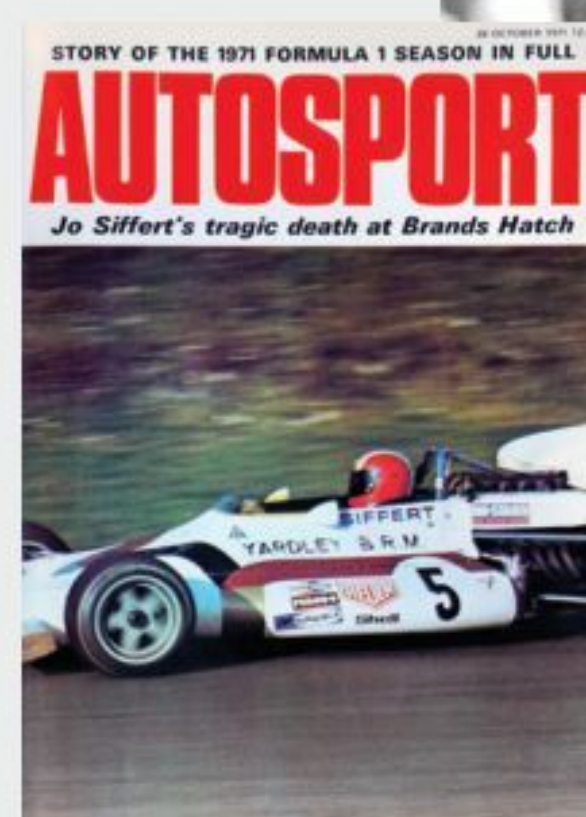
"I couldn't find anything that caused it. We couldn't check the tyres as they'd burned away. But a year later I found out.

"At Monza, Peter Gethin went off in practice for no reason and came into the pits slowly. His face was white and the left-front tyre was flat – it had obviously been quite a moment. It had just turned right and we thought the left-front tyre had gone flat. But when we took it to Firestone they said there was nothing wrong with the tyre and we could use it again if we wanted.

"Then I remembered that when we first switched to Dunlop [in 1969] the tyres had been very tight on the rims and Dunlop had been reluctant to change the tyre mould.

So a minute amount was skimmed off the wheels so we could get the tyres on and off. When we changed to Firestone that was long forgotten and the tyres were made perfectly to the required standard, so were a little loose.

"I concluded that the tyre beads were allowing air to escape and the tyre deflate even though there was no puncture. All F1 cars in those days used bolsters [special bolts] to keep the tyre in the wheel rims when cornering due to the very wide rims and low tyre pressures being used. It appears that the tyre bead seat could move in between the bolsters when cornering at maximum G-force, thereby allowing a rapid deflation of the tyre. I think that happened at Brands."



Was Siffert still tough on the equipment? In the Gulf film *A Year to Remember* on the 1970 sportscar season, JWA boss John Wyer seemed torn: "Seppi is a natural charger. His one idea of motor racing is to get in front and stay there. If there is a car in front, Seppi has to pass it if he can. This causes us no problem because it's desirable to have one driver of this type in the team and in the shorter races it may be essential. In the longer races he may sometimes drive harder than is strictly necessary, but he doesn't ask more from the car than it should be able to stand."

In the same film, Siffert gave his own view on what inspired him: "When I am driving I must pass all cars, Ferrari or Porsche of my own team, it's all the same. I must pass even if the chief of the team is not always happy."

Redman, who lost the 1970 Le Mans 24 Hours because Siffert missed a gearchange and blew up their 917's engine, says: "In terms of outright speed, there was little difference between Seppi and Pedro, but I feel Pedro was more sympathetic with the car and perhaps more thoughtful. I don't like to say this as it seems disloyal to my great driving partner."

Aside from the Spa victory, Siffert and Redman also won the Targa Florio (with a 908/3) and Osterreichting 1000Km (917K), but Seppi ended the 1970 F1 season with no points.

Siffert joined Rodriguez at BRM for 1971, making the two rivals team-mates in both F1 and endurance events. Once again Siffert tended to play second fiddle, but was thrust into the team leader role when Rodriguez was killed at the Norisring in July. Deschenaux felt this hit Siffert hard: "Joseph felt out on his own. At both BRM and John Wyer, he felt charged with a heavier burden."

Nevertheless, his performances, particularly with BRM, indicated he was back to his best without the need to beat Rodriguez. He dominated the Austrian GP and was a leading contender in the epic Italian GP slipstreamer (eventually won by team-mate Peter Gethin) until his P160 got stuck in fourth gear.

"Jo was a very, very good driver – undemanding, not a technical driver," says BRM designer Tony Southgate. "When Pedro got killed, Jo took over as number one and was immediately quicker. It was obviously a difference for him; we didn't do anything different."



Siffert was ninth following a spin in the wet Canadian GP, but he signed a new contract with BRM for 1972 and, with Porsche withdrawing from world sportscar racing thanks to the incoming three-litre regulations, looked set to join Alfa Romeo. He was then second to Francois Cevert in the championship-closing US GP, enough for him to take fifth in the drivers' table.

The Victory Race, to celebrate Stewart's second world title, was the final F1 event of the year and Siffert's 41st race of 1971. He took pole, with Gethin matching his time for a BRM 1-2.

Siffert made a poor getaway but was working his way back to the front when a mysterious failure (see above) pitched the BRM into the bank approaching the high-speed Hawthorn right-hander. The car took off and burst into flames as it landed. Apparently already knocked unconscious, Siffert had no chance of survival.

Nearly 50,000 people attended his funeral in the city of Fribourg, the cavalcade appropriately including a 917. Deschenaux summed up Siffert in the final line of his book: "Racing was his life and death, and he was happy." ❧

RACE CENTRE

RALLY SPAIN • GOODWOOD MEMBERS' MEETING • WORLD OF SPORT

Neuville is often
between a rock and
a hard place. This
time he just rocked



Neuville upstages Toyota's title battlers

Elfyn Evans looked good early doors, but then Hyundai's Belgian star went on a stage-dominating spree to take a comfortable victory

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN



Rally Spain was billed as a probable World Rally Championship title decider, with many expecting Sebastien Ogier to lift an eighth world crown at the penultimate round on his favoured asphalt. But it appears that nobody read the script, and what eventuated on Catalunya's finest roads was the complete opposite. Hyundai's Thierry Neuville issued a timely reminder that, had Lady Luck shone upon him this season, he could have been in Ogier's position vying for a world title. The Belgian recorded a dominant 24.1-second victory, winning 10 of the 17 stages.

As for the title race, the champagne is on ice. Ogier's Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans produced a gusty drive under pressure to follow Neuville home and take the championship fight into a Rally Monza decider next month. Ogier could finish only fourth following a rare collector's item of a rally, where one of sport's greatest of all time struggled to gel with his Yaris. The Frenchman also had a run-in with the local police for overtaking a vehicle on the hard shoulder of a road section on Saturday, resulting in a €2000 fine.

After a decade as a mixed-surface asphalt and gravel event, Rally Spain returned to its roots as an all-asphalt affair. This was clearly music to Ogier's ears given his prowess on the black stuff, and the fact that his accustomed road-sweeper role as championship leader wouldn't be such a burden as it is on gravel. "I feel quite relieved not starting a rally thinking about how much time I will lose on day one [road-sweeping]," he said before shakedown. "It is all about giving everything and being fast from the start to win this rally."

The format tweak was not the only change: Pirelli debuted a new strengthened hard-compound tyre after coming in for criticism following a series of punctures earlier in the year on Croatia's asphalt roads. And there was a new face in the service park, with Spaniard Nil Solans making his WRC debut on home soil as stand-in for injured 2C Competition Hyundai driver Pierre-Louis Loubet, who had sustained a



broken hip after being hit by a car in a road-traffic accident in France. Hyundai had five i20 Coupes in its arsenal, with the South Korean marque's new 2022 WRC signing Oliver Solberg tasked to gain experience for next year's part-time third-car campaign.

The title battle between Toyota pair Ogier and Evans dominated the build-up since the Welshman had slashed the points gap with victory in Rally Finland. Ogier expected a "big fight" from Evans, who he said had "nothing to lose", and these words couldn't have been more prophetic. It's unlikely even Ogier expected what Evans delivered on the opening stage, where he stunned everyone to clock the fastest time, 5.1s quicker than anyone else and 8.1s up on Ogier.

As one Toyota was flying, another stepped

over the edge when Takamoto Katsuta misunderstood a pacenote from stand-in co-driver Aaron Johnston and ploughed into the barriers. The Japanese managed to drag his wounded Yaris to stage end, but it was game over for the day, although he would return on Saturday under restart rules. "I expected an easier corner but it tightened a lot – I could not stop," he related.

Evans continued his charge by winning the next two stages, albeit sharing the fastest time on the second test with Neuville, despite the Hyundai driver struggling to turn his i20. Ogier was struggling to click with the Yaris, the new Pirelli tyres and the roads, sitting 12.6s adrift of leader Evans by mid-day service. "I tried a bit more for sure," said Ogier. "Someone who had a good wake-up this morning is Elfyn."

Despite sitting second, 7.9s shy of Evans, Neuville was far from happy, revealing he was using the handbrake at times to turn the car, given the severity of the understeer on display. "I tried really hard but no way – I can't even turn," he explained.

The lead three fared better than debutant Solans, who could hardly see due to a misted-up windscreen caused by his co-driver Marc Marti's drinks bag coming undone and depositing water inside the car. Luckily he reached service unscathed.

The complexion of the rally change on the Friday afternoon loop, which also featured the exit of a contender. Ott Tanak misjudged





Evans headed the
Toyota charge to
finish second

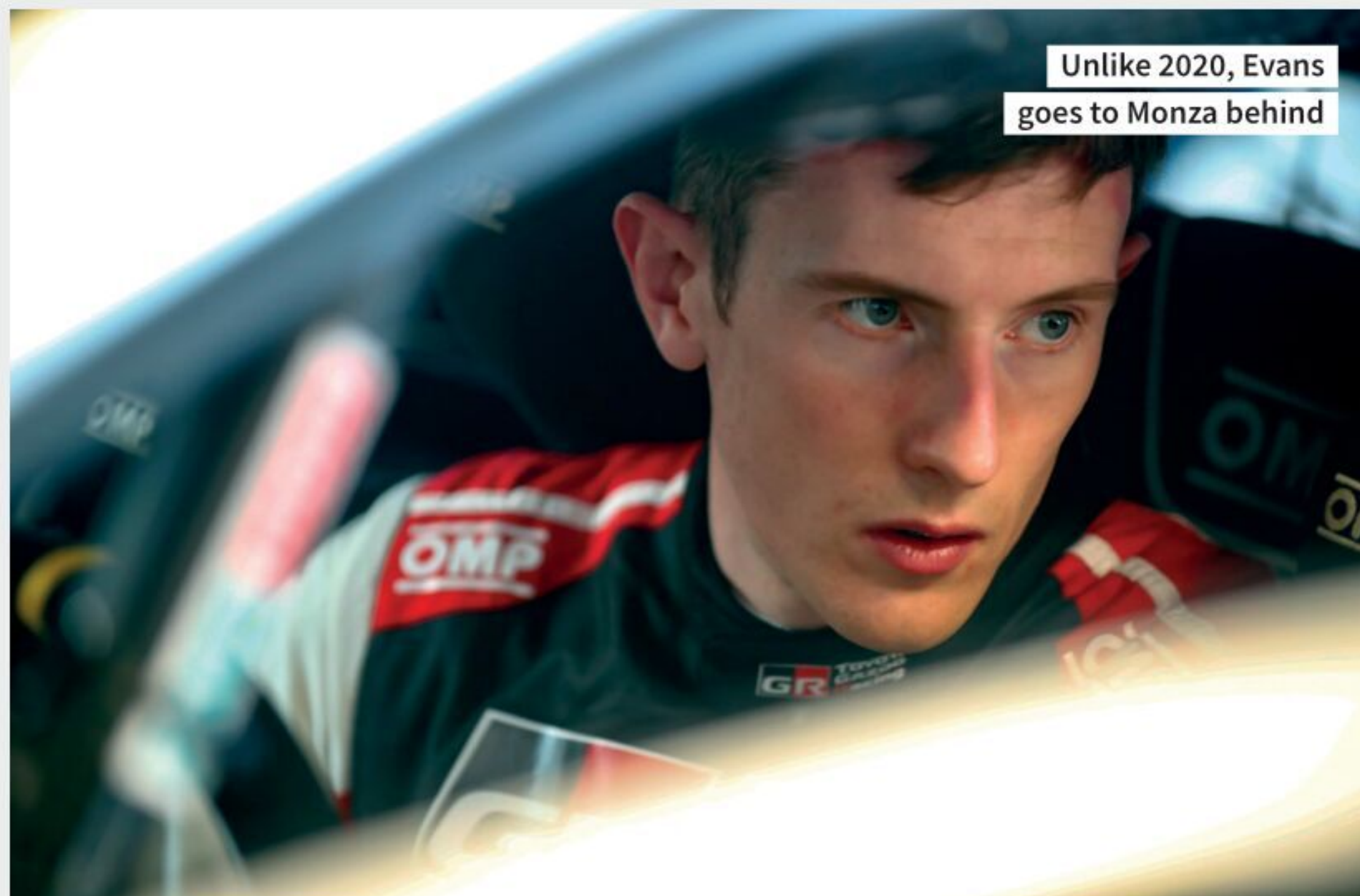
“It is all about giving everything and being fast from the start to win this rally”

a fast section on the fourth stage, clipping a tree stump that damaged the chassis of his Hyundai, scratching the Estonian from the remainder of the event. The moment arrived after surviving what he described as an “impressive spin” on stage two. “It was quite an impact, so we were probably carrying too much speed into the corner,” said Tanak, who emerged unscathed alongside co-driver Martin Jarveoja. “We couldn’t save it.”

There was pain of a more delicate kind on the stage for Solberg’s co-driver Craig Drew, who was caught on the in-car microphone saying: “I didn’t want to say but when we went over the first bump I really hurt my left bollock.” Craig was OK but his privates lit up social media...

The afternoon belonged to Neuville as a radical set-up change suggested by his engineer paid dividends. The Hyundai star won all three stages to end the day with a 0.7s lead over Evans, whose strong pace faded as the day progressed. “I was able to take more out of the car and you >>

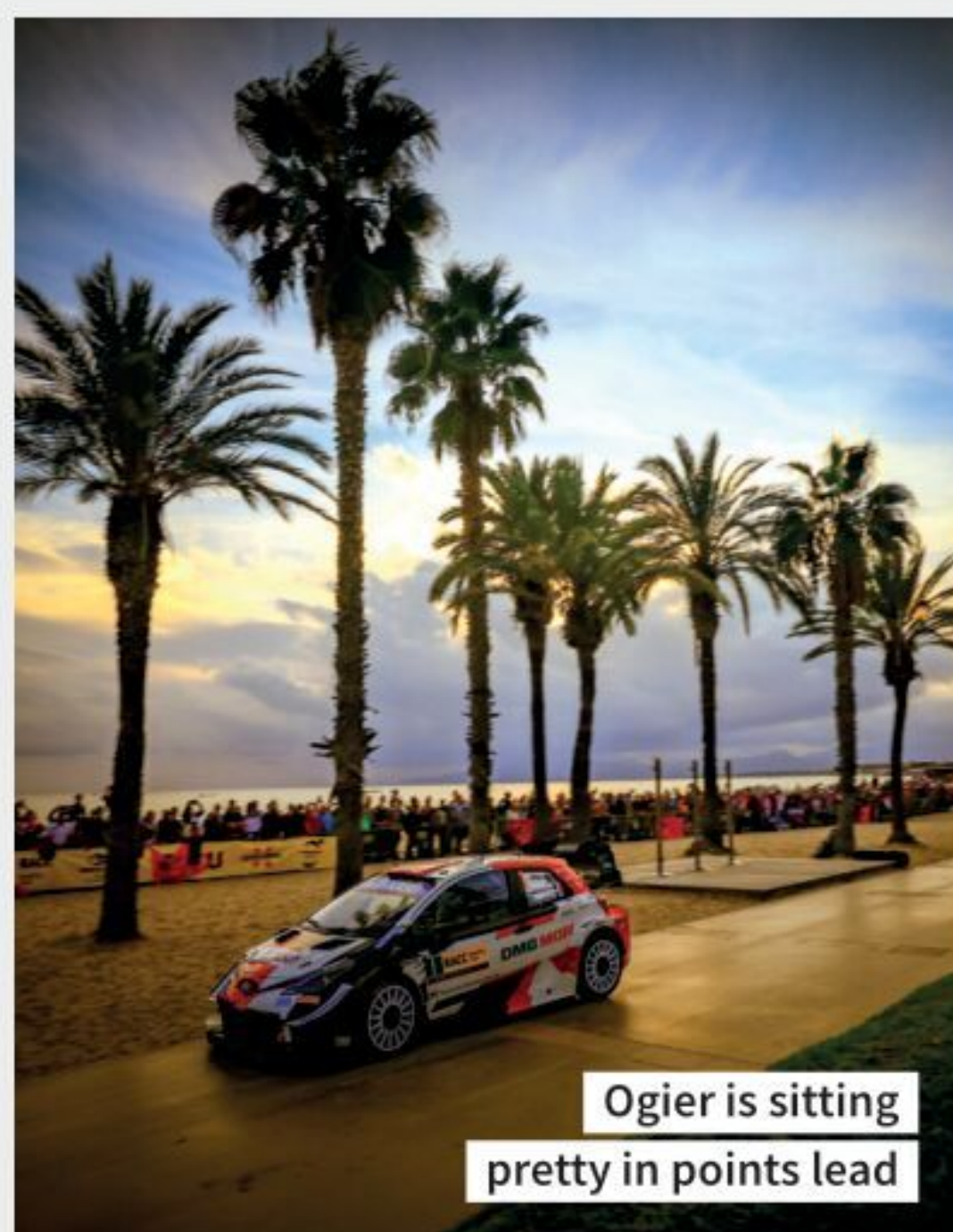
IT’S OGIER VERSUS EVANS – AGAIN



Unlike 2020, Evans
goes to Monza behind

For the second year in succession, the World Rally Championship title race is set for an “anything-can-happen” head-to-head duel between Toyota team-mates Elfyn Evans and Sebastien Ogier at Rally Monza. That’s the reward for a stirring drive by Evans in Spain to keep alive aspirations that seemed all but over a month ago, when gearbox issues thwarted his podium hopes on the Acropolis Rally. A stunning victory in Rally Finland followed up by a second in Spain mean Evans has cut Ogier’s advantage from 44 to 17 points, with 30 available at the Italian finale.

Admittedly, Ogier remains the firm favourite to land an eighth world title as he prepares to say farewell to full-time WRC action at the end of this year, but Evans knows all too well that anything can happen at Monza. Last year the Welshman had the advantage heading into the rally, but crashed out in the snowy conditions.



Ogier is sitting
pretty in points lead

“My thoughts are that it [the title] is still alive, and it’s probably a very similar situation to last year except the shoe is on the other foot,” said Evans. “We know anything can happen, but we also know Seb is a pretty smart guy and it’s going to take something pretty radical to overtake him, but having said that it’s quite clear what we have to do in Monza. Seventeen points is still quite a big gap, so we have to go there and try to win, and the powerstage could be quite crucial also. Ultimately it’s going to take a mistake or an issue for Seb not to be champion.”

But there was a tone of frustration in Evans’s words following his Spanish run, since he could have enhanced his title chances and taken more points out of Ogier’s lead had he found the sweet spot in his Yaris. “It should have been more [than seven points gained on Ogier],” he added. “It is what it is now. We are going to look at it, and we already know some of the reasons. Being early on the road on Friday in the first pass, the road was still very clean and as a result we were really able to drive with a car that was a bit of a racing car as such, and get a good feeling overall. But unfortunately in the afternoon we had more gravel on the roads and I really struggled to feel comfortable in the car. I had a pretty big moment on the middle stage on Friday, which was quite costly in terms of a confidence knock and a loss of time on that stage.

“We have been trying to work around those problems to make the car better, but unfortunately the small improvements actually cost some balance in the car, which brought some understeer. It’s been frustrating.”



Hyundai high jinks as team boss Adamo gets a soaking from Neuville...

can immediately see it in the times," said Neuville.

Evans was lucky that his title aspirations didn't evaporate on stage five, where he produced one of the saves of the season when a risky cut resulted in clipping a kerb and some frantic steering-wheel wrestling. "It was a pretty big moment," he admitted. "I just got caught out by the gravel and she just took off."

Ogier ended the day a distant third, 19.4s adrift and 5.4s ahead of the Hyundai of Dani Sordo, who'd been nibbling away at the gap. Kalle Rovanpera, still not 100% after his shunt in Finland, endured a lonely run to fifth in his Toyota, ahead of the M-Sport Fords of Adrien Fourmaux and Gus Greensmith, and then Hyundai pair Solberg and Solans.

Neuville proved his new-found pace was no fluke by delivering a series of devastating times to utterly dominate Saturday, when he won six of the seven stages to set up a second win of the season. Nearest rival Evans was heading in the other direction, chasing the ideal set-up to adapt to roads becoming increasingly gravel-strewn due to drivers taking cuts. "We gambled to try and change some stuff to improve the car, but it didn't work unfortunately and we've gone in the opposite direction," said Evans.

"It was a pretty big moment. I just got caught out by the gravel and she just took off"

Such was Neuville's speed that by mid-Saturday afternoon he had rattled off eight consecutive stage wins, and it was only an improving Ogier, who could now "trust" his Yaris, who ended the streak on stage 12. Ogier's resurgence prompted Sordo to claim his rival was back in "Sebastien Ogier mode".

A lead of 0.7s at the start of the day had been transformed into a 16.4s advantage over Evans once Neuville won the final blast of the day around the narrow, spectator-lined streets of host city Salou. "We made an important set-up change yesterday that allowed us to take more out of the car, but there are still things we could have done to go even quicker," opined the leader.

Ogier appeared to have responded to Sordo's pressure in the battle for third, until a costly engine stall wiped out almost all of the hard work on the day's final stage,

reducing the gap to 1.2s. Solberg had also lost more than 30s to a stall moments earlier. It proved to be a difficult day for M-Sport. Greensmith, partnered by co-driver Chris Patterson for the final time before his retirement, suffered a left-rear puncture that cost him more than a minute, while Fourmaux clipped a barrier and damaged his front-left in stage 11, losing seven minutes and throwing away sixth spot. A repair on the run allowed the Frenchman to continue, albeit with two-wheel drive.

With the rally seemingly won, Neuville appeared to back off on Sunday, but there was a late scare that threatened to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory when his car failed to start prior to the final stage. Neuville and co-driver Martijn Wydaeghe pushed the car to regroup, where marshals helped revive it. Luckily the starter-motor



Greensmith led the M-Sport Fords in sixth



...and team was further
boosted by Sordo's run
to third on home ground

issue was resolved, and in Neuville's words a "heart-attack" moment was avoided.

A light rain shower added yet further drama, although the final powerstage had dried significantly by the time Neuville completed the test, bagging the win and four bonus points in the process. "I'm relieved to be at the end," he said. "It was a tough weekend but we fought very hard. We had a good clean run and until near the end everything was perfect. Luckily again, there were enough marshals to give us the support and the car started immediately, and that is why we were able to continue. There was lots of stress but we kept cool and did the job."

Evans produced a heroic effort to pip Ogier on the powerstage after being down on the splits at halfway to secure second and take seven points out of his title rival, closing the gap to 17 points ahead of the Monza showdown.

While Neuville completed a 15th WRC win, one of the finest of his career, Sordo was the star of Sunday, winning all four stages to leapfrog Ogier for the final podium spot. "It's points for the championship," said Ogier. "Coming here I was targeting higher, but for some reason it didn't happen." Sordo's performance was a pleasing bonus for Evans's title aspirations and for Hyundai boss Andrea Adamo, since it ensured that the manufacturers' title battle with Toyota will go down to the wire at Rally Monza.

Rovanpera continued his lonely run to fifth after a surviving a wild excursion across a field on Saturday that the Finn declared "one of the biggest" he'd ever had, while Greensmith recovered to sixth ahead of Solberg and Solans. ❧

RESULTS ROUND 11/12, RALLY SPAIN, 14-17 OCTOBER

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Thierry Neuville (BEL) Martijn Wydaeghe (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT/Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	2h34m11.8s
2	Elfyn Evans (GBR) Scott Martin (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT/Toyota Yaris WRC	+24.1s
3	Dani Sordo (ESP) Candido Carrera (ESP)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT/Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+35.3s
4	Sebastien Ogier (FRA) Julien Ingrassia (FRA)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT/Toyota Yaris WRC	+42.1s
5	Kalle Rovanpera (FIN) Jonne Halttunen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT/Toyota Yaris WRC	+1m31.8s
6	Gus Greensmith (GBR) Chris Patterson (GBR)	M-Sport Ford WRT/Ford Fiesta WRC	+4m17.3s
7	Oliver Solberg (SWE) Craig Drew (GBR)	Hyundai 2C Competition/Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+4m26.7s
8	Nil Solans (ESP) Marc Marti (ESP)	Hyundai 2C Competition/Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+4m34.9s
9	Eric Camilli (FRA) Francois-Xavier Buresi (FRA)	Sports & You/Citroen C3 Rally2	+9m49.4s
10	Nikolay Gryazin (RUS) Konstantin Aleksandrov (RUS)	Movisport SRL/Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	+10m05.9s

OTHERS

16	Adrien Fourmaux (FRA) Alexandre Coria (FRA)	M-Sport Ford WRT/Ford Fiesta WRC	+12m53.0s
40	Takamoto Katsuta (JPN) Aaron Johnston (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT/Toyota Yaris WRC	+52m58.3s
R	Ott Tanak (EST) Martin Jarveoja (EST)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT/Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	SS4-accident

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Vilaplana 1 (12.43 miles)	Evans 10m16.9s	Evans	Neuville +5.1s
SS2 La Granadella 1 (13.55 miles)	Neuville and Evans 11m46.0s	Evans	Neuville +5.1s
SS3 Riba-roja 1 (8.83 miles)	Evans 8m30.8s	Evans	Neuville +7.9s
SS4 Vilaplana 2 (12.43 miles)	Neuville 10m17.6s	Evans	Neuville +7.6s
SS5 La Granadella 2 (13.55 miles)	Neuville 11m49.2s	Neuville	Evans +0.3s
SS6 Riba-roja 2 (8.83 miles)	Neuville 8m38.2s	Neuville	Evans +0.7s
SS7 Savalla 1 (8.75 miles)	Neuville 7m22.5s	Neuville	Evans +2.4s
SS8 Querol-Les Pobles 1 (11.91 miles)	Neuville 10m29.6s	Neuville	Evans +6.7s
SS9 El Montmell 1 (15.16 miles)	Neuville 12m03.5s	Neuville	Evans +9.0s
SS10 Savalla 2 (8.75 miles)	Neuville 7m24.5s	Neuville	Evans +11.1s
SS11 Querol-Les Pobles 2 (11.91 miles)	Ogier and Neuville 10m30.5s	Neuville	Evans +12.7s
SS12 El Montmell 2 (15.16 miles)	Ogier 12m03.7s	Neuville	Evans +14.2s
SS13 Salou (1.39 miles)	Neuville 2m23.6s	Neuville	Evans +16.4s
SS14 Santa Marina 1 (5.65 miles)	Sordo 5m05.5s	Neuville	Evans +17.1s
SS15 Riudecanyes 1 (10.16 miles)	Sordo 10m04.3s	Neuville	Evans +20.6s
SS16 Santa Marina 2 (5.65 miles)	Sordo 5m02.4s	Neuville	Evans +21.3s
SS17 Riudecanyes 2 (powerstage) (10.16 miles)	Sordo 10m09.3s	Neuville	Evans +24.1s

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 **Ogier** 204; 2 **Evans** 187; 3 **Neuville** 159; 4 **Rovanpera** 140; 5 **Tanak** 128; 6 **Craig Breen** 76; 7 **Katsuta** 68; 8 **Sordo** 63; 9 **Greensmith** 60; 10 **Fourmaux** 42.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 **Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT** 476; 2 **Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT** 429; 3 **M-Sport Ford WRT** 186; 4 **Hyundai 2C Competition** 58.



There was classic
Group B exotica in
historic element

NEXT EVENT

RALLY MONZA 25 NOVEMBER ISSUE

Will it be an eighth WRC crown for the amazing Ogier, or can Evans emulate McRae and Burns by becoming a British champion?

BTCC ace Hill brilliantly beat Tetley to inflict a rare defeat on the V8 tin-top hordes



Hill stars in golden autumn festival finale

The British Touring Car ace took on the rumbling V8s and scored a surprise Gerry Marshall Trophy victory for the Ford Capri at Goodwood

MARCUS PYE

PHOTOGRAPHY GARY HAWKINS AND  **motorsport**
IMAGES

Eighteen months after the 78th Goodwood Members' Meeting's due date, the sequence that began in 1949 continued memorably, with the British Automobile Racing Club at the helm as ever. The British Touring Car Championship organiser is familiar with the talent and tenacity of young Jake Hill – twice a race winner this season – but if Goodwood Road Racing Club members were not before last Sunday's Gerry Marshall Trophy finale, they are now! The Ford Capri driver's victory over the V8s brought the curtain down on a magnificent motorsport weekend.

Saturday's heats whittled 60 competitors in the high-octane Group 1 showcase down to 30 finalists. Following a hideously wet morning's official practice – as qualifying was known in the motor circuit's 1948-66 contemporary era

– the smaller capacity miscellany opened proceedings on an essentially dry track.

Fresh from his Revival Mini victory in a Historic-spec Cooper S, Nick Swift shot his 1275 GT from pole into a narrow lead before mechanical failure exiting the flat-out Fordwater kink sent it into the bank approaching St Mary's, scene of much more drama to come.

Jim Morris took up the cudgels in the faithful Morris Vulcan/Triang Volkswagen Golf GTI and led team-mate Tom Shephard (ex-Tony Lanfranchi VW Scirocco GTI) until Shephard's grassy spin at St Mary's kiboshed a 1-2. As a battle raged for second between Rupert Deeth (ex-Tim Goss 1275 GT) and Simon Goodliff (Datapost Ford Fiesta), Morris completed his quest. "It's 40 years since my dad [John] won a BSCC race outright at Mallory Park [where grids were split],

so this was very poignant," he said.

By sheer bravado Deeth repassed Goodliff into Woodcote on the last lap to nab second, Kerry Michael's Escort RS2000 diving between them as Goodliff ran wide. Shepherd set fastest lap recovering from midfield to fifth, ahead of Matt Green's Hughes of Beaconsfield Toyota Corolla. Gregor Marshall (Gerry's son) earned the last qualifying spot.

The meaty monsters came out directly afterwards, a puddle between Madgwick and Fordwater presenting a steeplechase-like 'watersplash' for those prepared to run off-line and take a risk. With the Chevrolet Camaros of Jack Young, period ace Stuart Graham, Grahame Bryant and David Clark (whose car ex-Formula 1 driver Reine Wisell put on pole for the 1981 Spa 24 Hours) banished to the back, Craig Davies's Boss Mustang gunning from row seven and Fred



Hill was 'only' second in his heat but went one better in the final

"Hill glued himself to the Camaro and refused to let go: 'I gave it everything'"

Shepherd's battered sister car even further back after a hefty first-lap off exiting Lavant in the morning, spectators' appetites were whetted for the tin-top encounter.

Top qualifier Hill led away in Ric Wood's Gitanes Capri evocation, pursued by Nick Padmore (UFO BMW 530i), Steve Soper (in Mark Martin's ex-Niki Lauda/Dieter Glemser early Capri) and Mike Whitaker's ex-Gordon Spice *Autocar* Capri. Fifth from row four inside a lap, Jack Tetley (Camaro) rounded Whitaker boldly into Lavant to go third next time round. Davies gobbled Soper up, then chased Tetley past Padmore's straight-six Beemer. Veteran Swede Stig Blomqvist and Gerry Marshall's old buddy Graham 'Skid' Scarborough in his ochre Track Marshall Capri were next. Out early was Marshall, whose Vauxhall Firenza sadly expired in a cloud of smoke.

Former Goodwood staffer Tetley blasted Grant Reid's Camaro into the lead on lap six, whereupon Hill glued himself to the ex-Henny Hemmes Eumig/Tintin-liveried car's tail and refused to let go. "I gave it everything," he said afterwards. They finished almost half a minute clear of Davies, whose

throttle was sticking, with Graham, Padmore, Soper, Whitaker and Shepherd blanketed by 1.7s and James Wood's original Patrick Motor Group Rover SDI looming in their mirrors, clear of Young and the Capris of Scarborough, Richard Meins, Charlie Brown and Ludo Lindsay in close company.

With the faster heat yielding pole for Sunday's finale, Tetley took it up, with Morris's diminutive black Golf in the middle and Hill to his left on the 3-2-3 grid formation. Hill bolted as the Union Flag was dropped, with Davies thundering up to join him, Tetley having been slow away. While V8 power enabled Davies to carry better speed to Woodcote, Hill clung to the inside, repeatedly braking later to maintain a slender advantage.

It wasn't until half-distance that the dark red Mustang rumbled ahead, Davies chopping across Hill's bows cleanly into Woodcote. A couple of times they were abreast into Lavant, Hill needing to carry as much speed as possible through the double-apex right to give himself a sporting chance on the Lavant Straight misnomer, with its flat-out left kink. Shepherd was now up to fourth, his confidence increasing with every lap. >>

ARUNDELL CUP HIBBERD'S FORMULA JUNIOR MIRACLE



Formula Junior was Peter Arundell's fiefdom in 1962 and 1963, when Team Lotus's star won British championships in types 22 and 27. Goodwood naming its race for the Essex man was thus appropriate, but the odds on an ex-Arundell car winning it were long.

Michael Hibberd (above, 4) qualified his ex-Arundell 22 26th in Saturday morning's rain. When a back problem arose, officials permitted son Andrew – a previous Goodwood winner – to race it from the back of the grid.

With Peter de la Roche, with whom he duelled in front-engined Lolas at last month's Revival, on pole in a Lola Mk3, there was much work to do over 20 minutes on Sunday. DLR set off quickly, taking Simon Diffey (ex-Peter Warr Lotus Components 20/22) and Pete Morton (Lightning Envoyette) with him.

When the leading Lola (below) broke a driveshaft (which doubles as the top suspension link) approaching Woodcote on lap nine of 14, de la Roche slewed to a halt. Hibberd's fourth became third. He then overpowered Morton and, with a lap to run, streaked past Diffey into Madgwick for victory.

"I couldn't believe it, said Diffey, "but in a funny sort of way Hibberd's car got its own back on mine. At Nurburgring in 1962 Bob Anderson had the ex-Arundell 22 and was disqualified for punching a timekeeper who put Frenchman Gabriel Aumont – in a Lotus 18 – on pole. With Bob out Peter Warr had a shot at winning, and did!"

MARCUS PYE





Bugatti defeated Alfa Romeo as poleman Pearson (left) lost out to Halusa by 0.327 seconds

The race hotted up on lap nine of 14 when Hill pulled off an astonishing pass into the first part of St Mary's, barely appearing to slow for the fast right as he dived through a Capri-width gap inside the Mustang. Hill found an early apex but ran out of road on the exit, as did Davies. Both cars bounced down the greensward, their drivers fighting to regain control. Hill traversed the asphalt and found himself off on the right instead of taking the off-camber left, now with the bigger Ford on it, but its screen muddled.

Undeterred, Hill hounded Davies down again and onlookers hunkered down for a grandstand finish. Two laps later, under pressure once more, Davies careered off at St Mary's, hit the conveyor belting backwards,

bounced out, spun and wiped its nose too. "There might have been something down, but I don't know," said Davies. As Hill went past, with Tetley, Shepherd and Graham some seconds back, onlookers were staggered to see Davies not only continue but also to race hard. Shephard wasn't so fortunate. He flew off at high speed through Madgwick, where the Scirocco sideswiped the tyre wall and was launched onto its side. Somehow it landed on its wheels mid-track, but it was game over.

Hill rattled off the remaining laps, while Tetley wrestled the understeering Camaro, and mangled Mustangs of Shepherd and Davies closed up. "That was fantastic, but I was gutted when he [Davies] went off a couple of laps after we were getting feisty," said Jake.

"I fluffed the start, changed up to second to prevent wheelspin and it didn't," explained Tetley. Young Shepherd was overjoyed with third after a superb run. "That's testament to getting back on the horse," he said, having rewarded his family team.

Best of the under two-litre runners was Morris, who brought the black Golf home an excellent 11th, ahead of Jason Minshaw (RS2000) and Deeth. Shephard had the consolation of setting class best lap.

Two wonderful short sprint races for Edwardian specials, recognising Selwyn Francis Edge, showcased a pioneering age and indomitable spirit. Ben Collings was going away on Saturday when the hinged bonnet of Mercedes Classic's Blitzen Benz flew open exiting Lavant. Hughie Walker went on to win in the Hall-Scott aero-engined Theophile Schneider, from Julian Majzub's capable 1916 Sunbeam Indianapolis and Walker's father Mark's mighty 200hp Darracq. The four leading protagonists battled anew on Sunday, when Walker Jr sailed boldly past (bonnetless) Collings at Woodcote, only to be blown away in the drag race to the chequer.

Gary Pearson had only driven Christian Glaesel's ex-works Alfa Romeo Monza around a Hampshire trading estate prior to qualifying it on pole for the Earl Howe Trophy race, celebrating French Grands Prix of the 1930s. Goodwood's most successful driver of the modern era was denied though by Austrian Lukas Halusa, who drove his family's Bugatti



Bryant took Ronnie Hoare honours in Porsche 904 Carrera GTS



Walker was on (and over?!) the limit as he took SF Edge laurels with a first and a second



Greensall's E-type dominated Moss Trophy from pole position

“The Don Parker Trophy attracted the best 500cc entry in years”

T35B beautifully to repel Pearson's renewed advances by a few metres. James Wood was third on his T35B debut, guesting in Nick Mason's example.

The Don Parker Trophy race attracted the best 500cc F3 entry in years but, when the engines were stopped and restarted in the assembly area, then the start was aborted when John Chisholm's Arnott wouldn't go on the grid, the obscurati fell like flies. Coopers were left up front. Quickest by 2.3 seconds in Saturday's rain, Tom Waterfield was beaten away by George Shackleton, who challenged before an electrical gremlin put Waterfield out. Unaffected by a damaged tailcone from a brush with Waterfield at St Mary's, Shackleton landed the big win he'd craved since nosediving into the pitwall in 2015. Chris Wilson's Guernsey-flagged Cooper was second, from battling Simons Frost (in the injured Nigel Challis's) and Dedman.

Five Porsche 904 Carrera GTs graced the Ronnie Hoare Trophy grid, but Spa Six Hours victor Oliver Bryant was peerless, first time out in Kevin Morfett's car, fresh from >>

DEMONSTRATIONS V12 HEAVEN AT GOODWOOD



On a glorious Sunday afternoon in West Sussex the sound of musical V12 engines spanning 30 years – a Honda, a Cosworth and 14 Jaguars – rent the air as Goodwood's 78th Members' Meeting reached its rousing crescendo. These were demonstrations, and conditions were perfect for appreciating the aural delights of these mechanical masterpieces.

All eyes were on Gordon Murray Automotive's T50 on its public debut. Out in a set of cars tracing the lineage of the South African-born designer's brainchildren, from 750 Formula racer through recently created 1972 Duckhams Special Le Mans contender and F1 Brabham BT44 homages to Rocket and McLaren F1 GTR, the new lightweight hypercar is sensational from every angle.

Bristling with innovation, from exotic materials to (working) design cues such as the Brabham BT46B-esque fan in its tail, the T50 is powered by a four-litre Cosworth V12 engine designed to exceed 12,000rpm. No wonder the production run of 100 is a sell-out. One lucky customer is four-time IndyCar champion Dario Franchitti (above), honoured to demo the first example.

Ayrton Senna won seven grands prix

en route to the last of his three F1 world championships and, 30 years on, the McLaren-Honda MP4/6 (the only V12 machine to win the drivers' title) in which he beat Williams-Renault's Nigel Mansell looks ageless. Bruno Senna, Ayrton's nephew, demonstrated a collector's example for the first time. The 1991 3.5-litre V12 sounded magnificent as the dayglo red-and-white projectile shot round the former RAF Westhampnett aerodrome, its exhaust note unwavering against the backdrop of Chichester Cathedral's spire, another staggering engineering feat of centuries past.

The Jaguar Sport XJR-15s (below), which circulated with six-litre V12 soundtracks synchronising, reminded us of the short-lived race series that constructor Tom Walkinshaw Racing brokered alongside GPs at Monaco, Silverstone and Spa in 1991. Whether it was the most spectacular one-make 'championship' of all time, as one commentator ventured, is subjective. The BMW M1 Procar series, which supported European F1 events in 1979-80, surely holds that crown... Albeit 'only' with six-cylinder engines.

MARCUS PYE



a Historika restoration. Belgian Vincent Gaye charged his Ferrari 275 GTB/C ahead at flagfall, but Bryant usurped the V12 machine on lap two. Overpowered in the initial stampede, Michael Gans jostled his Abarth Simca to second before retiring, leaving an inspired Billy Bellinger in Keith Ahlers's Morgan Plus 4 SLR to outfox Gaye.

Moss Trophy GT poleman Nigel Greensall's hole-shot start in David Gooding's Jaguar E-type beat Mike Whitaker's AC Cobra

“Cottingham was denied a repeat victory by a long interlude”

Dragonsnake to Madgwick, which was his priority. Greensall didn't put a wheel wrong thereafter as Whitaker concentrated increasingly on staving off Bryant's grey E-type fixed-head coupe, which filled his mirrors. Bryant recovered second, restoring qualifying order, when for the third successive lap they caught a Lotus Elite at Lavant.

A chunk of Saturday's Pierpoint Cup American V8 ran under caution after quintuple Le Mans winner Emanuele Pirro, running fourth in Chris Clarkson's Ford Falcon, spun at the kink before St Mary's, hit the tyre wall broadside and rolled languidly, without hurt. Nobody looked likely to stop former Palmer Audi champion Adrian Willmott and 2013 BTCC winner Andy Jordan in the former's ballistically quick Studebaker



Salvadori Cup gets under way and Cottingham's blue Tojeiro starts its charge from the back

Lark, to which the miscued safety car initially gifted a lap's lead. Anthony Reid ran long, avoiding pit congestion (the window was suspended during the clear-up), and giving Murray Shepherd (Fred's cousin) breathing space over Tom Ingram in Marco Attard's newly built Falcon. Benoit Treluyer, in Nick Jarvis's Falcon, robbed Stig Blomqvist (in Bill Shepherd's Galaxie 500) of fourth.

The safety car was also scrambled on lap one of Sunday's Gurney Cup race, Chris Goodwin (Lotus 23B) having spun and impacted backwards at the same place as Pirro. Westie Mitchell couldn't quite avoid the Lotus and gashed his Chevron B8's nose, while Mark Shaw gyrated John Bladon's McLaren M1A to miss both. Rob Hall led well but waited before relaying veteran M1A owner Andrew

Wareing, who was ambushed by a posse of Ford GT40s. James Cottingham/Andrew Smith did well to trump Tom Kristensen/Sam Hancock and Shaun Lynn/Dario Franchitti. Westie and son Sam Mitchell broke the GT40 monopoly in eighth, ahead of Hall/Wareing.

Now aboard his Tojeiro-Jaguar and obliged to start from the back of the Salvadori Cup encounter due to brake compliance issues, Cottingham was denied a repeat of his Sussex Trophy victory at the Revival by a long interlude while Julian Majzub's Sadler-Chevy was lugged from the Lavant gravel bed. With officials trying to save time, no extension was granted, thus Cottingham shadowed second-placed Miles Griffiths (in Philip Walker's orange Lotus 15) over the line, but Chris Ward was well clear in Steve Osborn's Lister. ❧

2021 MEMBERS' MEETING STAR CARS



ABARTH SIMCA 2000 CORSA

The delectable long-nosed GT was Italian Tirolean Herbert Demetz's factory entry and won the 1965 Bolzano-Mendola hillclimb. American Michael Gans was quickest in practice for the Revival's Fordwater Trophy race in 2019, when the Abarth engine threw a rod on his slowing-down lap, precluding a race. A short-nosed version was a period Members' Meeting regular, driven by Bob Burnard. Gans qualified third for the Ronnie Hoare Trophy but retired early.



ASTON MARTIN DB3S/6 '62 EMU'

Crashed at Le Mans in 1954, in coupe form, DB3S/6 was rebodied and finished second in 1956 – Stirling Moss/Peter Collins a lap behind Ron Flockhart/Ninian Sanderson's Ecurie Ecosse Jaguar D-type – and 1958 with half-brothers Peter and Graham Whitehead. Collins/Tony Brooks drove it to third in the 1955 Goodwood Nine Hours, won by Peter Walker/Dennis Poore's DB3S/7. Now raced by Argentinian Mathias Sielecki, it retired from the Salvadori Cup.



CHEVRON-BMW B8

Derek Bennett, who designed and built Chevron cars in Bolton, was entered in a Formula Junior Gemini at Goodwood in 1964. None of his GT cars competed here in period, but Brian Classick won the final (71st) MM's Clubmans event in a B1. The only left-hand-drive B8 of 44, Westie and Sam Mitchell's was supplied to German Nikolaus Killenberg and later raced by Dutchmen Kees Kwinkelenberg and Leo Kemmer. The Mitchells were top non-GT40 runners in the Gurney Cup.

RESULTS GOODWOOD MEMBERS' MEETING, 16-17 OCTOBER

GERRY MARSHALL TROPHY: GROUP 1 TOURING CARS 1970-82, FINAL (14 LAPS)

1 Jake Hill (Ford Capri III 3.0S); 2 Jack Tetley (Chevrolet Camaro Z28) +4.195s; 3 Fred Shepherd (Ford Mustang Boss 302); 4 Craig Davies (Ford Mustang Boss 302); 5 Stuart Graham (Chevrolet Camaro Z28); 6 James Wood (Rover 3500 SD1). **Pole** Tetley. **Fastest lap** Davies 1m27.434s (98.81mph). **Starters** 30.

HEAT 1 (13 LAPS) 1 Jim Morris (VW Golf GTI);

2 Rupert Deeth (Mini 1275 GT) +7.521s; 3 Kerry Michael (Ford Escort RS2000); 4 Simon Goodliff (Ford Fiesta); 5 Tom Shephard (VW Scirocco GTI); 6 Matt Green (Toyota Celica 1600 Coupe). **P** Nick Swift (Mini 1275 GT). **FL** Shephard 1m31.652s (94.26mph). **S** 28.

HEAT 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Tetley; 2 Hill +1.719s;

3 Davies; 4 Graham; 5 Nick Padmore (BMW 530i); 6 Steve Soper (Ford Capri 3.0 S).

P Hill. **FL** Tetley 1m27.514s (98.72mph). **S** 26.

SF EDGE TROPHY: EDWARDIAN SPECIALS PRE-1923, RACE 1 (5 LAPS)**1 Hughie Walker (Theophile Schneider);**

2 Julian Majzub (Sunbeam Indianapolis) +1.722s; 3 Mark Walker (Darracq 200hp); 4 Richard Scaldwell (Lorraine-Dietrich 130hp); 5 James Collins (Hudson Super Six); 6 Christopher Mann (Alfa Romeo RLTF). **P** Ben Collings (Benz 200hp 'Blitzen Benz'). **FL** M Walker 1m52.595s (76.73mph). **S** 21.

RACE 2 (4 LAPS) 1 Collings; 2 H Walker +0.396s; 3 Majzub; 4 M Walker; 5 Mathias Sielecki (Bugatti T16); 6 Mann. P H Walker. FL H Walker 1m54.866s (75.21mph). S 19.

EARL HOWE TROPHY: TWO-SEATER GRAND PRIX CARS & VOITURETTES TO 1933 (11 LAPS)

1 Lukas Halusa (Bugatti T35B); 2 Gary Pearson (Alfa Romeo 8C 2600 Monza) +0.327s; 3 James Wood (Bugatti T35B); 4 Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Monza); 5 Duncan Pittaway (Bugatti T35); 6 Michael Birch (Talbot AV105). **P** Pearson. **FL** Pearson 1m37.167s (88.91mph). **S** 28.

DON PARKER TROPHY: 500cc F3

1950-59 (7 LAPS) 1 George Shackleton (Cooper-Norton Mk11); 2 Chris Wilson (Cooper-Norton Mk8) +17.616s; 3 Simon Frost (Cooper-Norton Mk8); 4 Simon

Dedman (Cooper-Norton Mk10); 5 Eddie Williams (Martin-Norton); 6 Richard Fuller (Cooper-Norton Mk8). **P** Tom Waterfield (Cooper-Norton Mk9). **FL** Waterfield 1m42.130s (84.19mph). **S** 24.

RONNIE HOARE TROPHY: ROADGOING SPORTS & GT CARS 1960-66 (13 LAPS)

1 Oliver Bryant (Porsche 904 Carrera GTS); 2 Billy Bellinger (Morgan Plus 4 SLR) +6.125s; 3 Vincent Gaye (Ferrari 275 GTB/C); 4 Josh Files (Triumph TR4); 5 Andrew Smith (Porsche 901); 6 David Clark (Porsche 904 Carrera GTS). **P** Bryant. **FL** Bryant 1m32.174s (93.73mph). **S** 26.

MOSS TROPHY: GT CARS 1958-62

(12 LAPS) 1 Nigel Greensall (Jaguar E-type); 2 Oliver Bryant (Jaguar E-type FHC) +5.165s; 3 Mike Whitaker (AC Cobra Dragonsnake); 4 Jack Minshaw (Jaguar E-type); 5 Gregor Fisker (Jaguar E-type); 6 Vincent Gaye (Ferrari 250 GT SWB/C). **P** Greensall. **FL** Greensall 1m29.076s (96.99mph). **S** 26.

PIERPOINT CUP: V8 SALOON CARS TO 1966 (26 LAPS)

1 Adrian Willmott/Andy Jordan (Studebaker Lark Daytona 500); 2 Anthony Reid/Murray Shepherd (Ford Mustang) +23.688s; 3 Marco Attard/Tom Ingram (Ford Falcon Sprint); 4 Nick Jarvis/Benoit Treluyer (Ford Falcon Sprint); 5 Bill Shepherd/Stig Blomqvist (Ford Galaxie 500); 6 Henry Mann/Steve Soper (Ford Mustang). **P** Willmott. **FL** B

Shepherd 1m30.171s (95.81mph). **S** 27.

GURNEY CUP: SPORTS-PROTOTYPES TO 1968 (30 LAPS)

1 James Cottingham/Andrew Smith (Ford GT40); 2 Tom Kristensen/Sam Hancock (Ford GT40) +9.836s; 3 Shaun Lynn/Dario Franchitti (Ford GT40); 4 Chris Wilson/Andre Lotterer (Ford GT40); 5 Miles Griffiths/Gordon Shedden (Ford GT40); 6 Hans Hugenholtz/David Hart (Ford GT40). **P** Griffiths. **FL** Lotterer 1m20.583s (106.86mph). **S** 25.

SALVADORI CUP: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SPORTSCARS 1955-60

(10 LAPS) 1 Chris Ward (Lister-Jaguar Knobbly); 2 Miles Griffiths (Lotus-Climax 15) +3.871s; 3 James Cottingham (Tojeiro-Jaguar); 4 Michael Gans (Lotus-Climax 15); 5 Gary Pearson (Jaguar D-type); 6 John Young (Lister-Jaguar Knobbly). **P** Ward. **FL** Cottingham 1m25.296s (101.29mph). **S** 26.

ARUNDELL CUP: REAR-ENGINE FORMULA JUNIOR TO 1963 (14 LAPS)

1 Andrew Hibberd (Lotus-Ford 22); 2 Simon Diffey (Lotus-Ford 20/22) +0.611s; 3 Pete Morton (Lightning Envoyette-Ford); 4 Richard Wilson (Brabham-Ford BT6); 5 James Murray (Lola-Ford Mk5A); 6 Chris Drake (Elva-Ford 300). **P** Peter de la Roche (Lola-Ford Mk3). **FL** Hibberd 1m24.540s (102.20mph). **S** 29.

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

**ELVA-BMW GT160**

One of three, based on a Mk7S chassis powered by a two-litre BMW M10 engine, with coupe body styled by Fissore, the 1964 London (Earls Court) and Turin Show car was used on the road by Chris Amon. The Hon Richard Wrottesley's sister car raced at Le Mans. Michael Birch's example, raced by Richard Bradley and Gareth Burnett, finished eighth in the recent Spa Six Hours and was 13th in the Gurney Cup at Goodwood last weekend.

**LEA-FRANCIS R-TYPE**

Kaye Don drove the supercharged 1500cc 'Leaf' to third in the Junior Car Club's 200-mile race at Brooklands in 1928, behind Sir Malcolm Campbell (Delage) and Captain George Eyston (Bugatti T39A). Wilf Green – father of Willie – and Nobby Spero competed in 1929 and 1930 respectively. Claude Wagstaff then raced it in fire engine red at the new Donington Park venue among others. David Brazell was 21st in the Earl Howe Trophy, only his second time in the car.

**LYNX Mk3**

Australian Lynx cars were the work of John Bruderlin, Leon Thomas and fabricator Peter Wilkins of Lynx Engineering in Sydney. The ultimate Mk3s were designed by Ron Tauranac as Ralt cars, but Wilkins bought the rights when Tauranac relocated to England to join compatriot and (then) double F1 world champion Jack Brabham in the fledgling Motor Racing Developments concern. Mirage Engineering's Joseph Pomfret raced James Hagan's car to 18th in the Arundell Cup.



Vernay leads race two to score win on home soil

Vernay back in title hunt at pretty Pau-Arnos

WTCC
PAU-ARNOS (FRA)
17 OCTOBER
ROUND 6/8

Jean-Karl Vernay stormed back into title contention by getting the drop on Yvan Muller and claiming a race-two home win on the World Touring Car Cup's first visit to the little 1.88-mile Pau-Arnos circuit in France.

The victory represented a first in the WTCC for the Engstler Hyundai driver since the first weekend of the season at the Nurburgring, and boosts the former points leader back up to second, behind reigning champion Yann Ehrlacher. The Lynk & Co ace had a difficult time at a tight but pretty track that combines the best attributes of Cadwell and Oulton Park.

Yvan Muller took his first pole position since Macau in 2019 in his Lynk & Co,

but was too slow away from the grid to stop Vernay shooting up the inside line into the fast chicane at Turns 1 and 2. A late safety-car intervention gave Vernay an extra headache, but he kept clear of Muller in what turned into a one-lap shootout to secure the win. "The start was the key," he said. "I did a much better job than Yvan. I really wanted this one. Yesterday I was annoyed after Q3 not to have pole position. But after the start I just managed the tyres in case of a safety car, which arrived with a surprise for the last lap."

Vernay's fellow Hyundai ace Norbert Michelisz ran third until he complained of a vibration and dropped his pace. On such a tight circuit, that triggered a hectic climax as the pack closed up behind him. Santiago Urrutia tapped him twice before relieving the Hungarian of third, with Frederic Vervisch snatching a fourth to go with his race-one win. Now Ehrlacher closed in, only for title rival Esteban Guerrieri to try a

move at the back chicane. The Munnich Motorsport Honda whacked both a tyre stack and the Lynk & Co, which darted to the right of a second tyre pile on the exit, as both recovered to hold position.

The safety car appeared on what was supposed to be the last lap to relocate the dislodged stack, the stewards adding two laps to the distance to ensure the race finished under green flags – to Vernay's annoyance. But he survived the sprint to finish ahead of Muller, Urrutia and Vervisch, with Ehrlacher nabbing fifth at the flag from the struggling Michelisz.

Earlier in the day, Comtoyou Audi driver Vervisch clinched the partially reversed-grid race one from pole position after just holding back Thed Bjork at Turn 1. Behind them a slow starting Ehrlacher inadvertently tagged Tiago Monteiro, the Honda crashing into the barrier at Turn 3 and triggering a safety car interlude. Meanwhile, Muller broke a driveshaft after contact with Attila Tassi, his Cyan Racing team repairing the car in good time for race two.

Vervisch was never under threat once racing resumed on lap seven, while Bjork and Gabriele Tarquini completed the podium, with Guerrieri and team-mate Nestor Girolami next. Michelisz allowed Vernay through for sixth to aid the Frenchman's reviving title hopes.

Vernay is now just 16 points behind Ehrlacher, Guerrieri having dropped a place to third a further six back, and Vervisch is up to fourth with Adria and Sochi to come. Young Ehrlacher still has plenty to do to earn a second successive world crown.

DAMIEN SMITH



Vervisch skips his Audi to victory in the opener

Ekstrom adds electric crown to his honours

PURE ETCR
PAU-ARNOS (FRA)
15-17 OCTOBER
ROUND 5/5

Mattias Ekstrom made history by becoming the inaugural Pure ETCR champion in the most dramatic of circumstances on the series' first visit to Pau-Arnos.

The two-time DTM champion and one-time World Rallycross title winner arrived in France with a healthy 29-point advantage over Jean-Karl Vernay, and increased this to 34 across the opening two heats, meaning a fifth-place finish in Sunday's SuperFinal B would be enough to crown him as the winner of the world's first all-electric touring car title.

As simple as that sounded for Ekstrom as he launched his Cupra e-Racer off the line from pole position, his hopes were almost shattered within seconds as he collided with fellow front-row starter Philipp Eng at the entry to the sweeping downhill first turn.

Ekstrom sustained a left-rear puncture and spun across the grass, kicking up a huge cloud of dust and suffering damage to his floor and steering, but miraculously avoided being collected by the oncoming pack.

The Zengo Motorsport mechanics were quick to replace his punctured tyre and send him on his way, albeit a lap down in last place. Crucially though, with Eng's Romeo Ferraris-M1RA Giulia ETCR never re-emerging from the pits due to his own part in the incident, this meant Ekstrom was now running fifth, where he finished, to wrap up the title by just four points.

"I wasn't so worried," he said. "I knew I was a lap down and I knew I was fifth and this would be enough because the team was giving me good information. I just had to nurse the car, because the steering wasn't straight, and I had a big vibration. I only saw



Ekstrom went from damaged spinner to championship winner

when I got out of the car the left-front wheel was barely on the rim!"

Vernay and team-mate Tom Chilton were the chief beneficiaries of the incident, moving into first and second and staying there to make sure Hyundai won both SuperFinals, Augusto Farfus having bounced back from a points penalty for contact with Luca Filippi in round one to win SuperFinal A. Vernay's 72-point haul made him the king of the weekend with Farfus second – nine points worse off. "It's great to finish on a high," said Vernay.

The third of the title contenders heading into Sunday's SuperFinals was Mikel Azcona, but his hopes were dealt a severe blow in Saturday's Time Trial when he locked up and ran wide at Turn 3, qualifying fifth as a result. He climbed to third by the flag to briefly put himself into the series lead and with a favourable set of results in the event of a tie-break, should both Ekstrom and Vernay have retired from their SuperFinal. He ultimately finished third in the points, but helped Cupra wrap up the Manufacturers' title.

SEAT/Cupra veteran Jordi Gene and

WEEKEND WINNERS

WORLD TOURING CAR CUP

PAU-ARNOS (FRA)

Race 1 Frederic Vervisch

Comtoyou (Audi RS3 LMS TCR)

Race 2 Jean-Karl Vernay

Engstler (Hyundai Elantra N TCR)

PURE ETCR

PAU-ARNOS (FRA)

Jean-Karl Vernay

Hyundai Motorsport N

(Hyundai Veloster N ETCR)



For full results visit motorsportstats.com

Romeo Ferraris-M1RA's Rodrigo Baptista began the weekend as the last of the five title contenders. Ekstrom's round one win eliminated Baptista from the fight, while Gene played the team game in round two to finish behind Ekstrom, sacrificing his championship hopes in the process.

DYLAN JACOBS



Ekstrom's spin is initiated only seconds into the series finale

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On-fire Larson secures his shot at the 2021 Cup crown

NASCAR CUP
TEXAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY (USA)
17 OCTOBER
ROUND 33/36

Kyle Larson became the first driver to guarantee himself a chance to compete for the 2021 NASCAR Cup Series thanks to his Texan triumph, his second win in a row.

The Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet Camaro racer locked himself into the 'Championship 4' for the 7 November season finale at Phoenix with a dominant performance in Sunday's race at Texas

Motor Speedway. But while Larson led the most laps (256 of 334), he still had to hold off team-mate William Byron on six restarts over the final 60 laps to secure his eighth win of the season.

"This is so cool," Larson said. "We get to race for a championship. This is crazy. Thankfully, I was just able to clear William every time into [Turn] 1 and not have to fight him off at [Turn] 2. It was awesome. Hopefully, we can still get some more wins the rest of the year."

While Larson was able to stay clear of the carnage, the final 34 laps would have

three playoff contenders — Joey Logano, Martin Truex Jr and Denny Hamlin — knocked out of contention for the win and two of them — Logano and Truex — sent to the garage. Christopher Bell ended up finishing third, Brad Keselowski was fourth and Kevin Harvick rounded out the top five.

With races at Kansas Speedway and Martinsville remaining in the semi-final round, the four drivers in the playoff standings in danger of missing out on a chance to compete for the title are Chase Elliott, Keselowski, Truex and Logano.

JIM UTTER

Sainteloc crew bag spoils in contentious Indy enduro

INTERCONTINENTAL GT CHALLENGE
INDIANAPOLIS (USA)
17 OCTOBER
ROUND 2/3

Pitlane collisions, GT3 challengers tripping over GT4 contenders, and the stewards' intervention created a clumsy Indianapolis 8 Hour contest that was won by the Team Sainteloc Audi R8 LMS of Patric Niederhauser, Christopher Haase and Markus Winkelhock.

The Intercontinental GT Challenge round was summed up rather neatly by the fortunes of Ferrari's Callum Ilott. He delivered a stunning three-car pass to put the AF Corse car shared with Alessio Rovera and Antonio Fuoco into the lead.

But the win slipped away when he tried to pass a GT4 Aston Martin Vantage and was pinched against the wall, dropping to 25th.

WRT Audi star Dries Vanthoor was also in strife when his push for first place was undone by a penalty for failing to follow instructions from race control. And with the charge of the polesitting Ferrari 488 of Alessandro Pier Guidi/Come Ledogar/Nicklas Nielsen undone by a collision with a GT4 Toyota Supra, it helped put the second-starting Sainteloc crew in position to score victory by almost 12s over the ASP Mercedes of Raffaele Marciello/Timur Boguslavskiy/Daniel Juncadella.

While the entry hadn't consistently shown race-winning pace, Niederhauser would guide the R8 to the spoils after



Niederhauser (left) and Haase pose without Winkelhock

Vanthoor's reprimand, but was without Winkelhock for the celebrations, with the 2007 European Grand Prix leader jetting off early to attend the birth of his child.

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P52 WEEKEND WINNERS

Gronholm snares second win

WORLD RALLYCROSS
MONTALEGRE (PRT)
17 OCTOBER
ROUND 6/7

Knowing he needed to limit the points that championship leader Timmy Hansen could take away in Portugal, Johan Kristoffersson was in attack mode, but while the pair were caught up in their own battle it was Niclas Gronholm who came through to win.

Hansen and Kristoffersson started together in Q1, with the latter taking an early joker lap, then losing time in traffic, picking up a puncture and falling down the order. Without the inside line on the grid for Q2, Q3 or Q4, Kristoffersson could only manage

second fastest in each, but it was an overtake on Hansen in their Q4 race that stated the Swede's intentions. Kevin Hansen won that session, but Kristoffersson had done enough to net pole for semi-final two. In the knockout race, he lost the lead at the start to Gronholm, but overtook him on the final tour to secure a front-row start for the final, alongside semi-final one winner Hansen.

The polesitter defended the inside into the opening corner in the final, with Kristoffersson and Kevin Hansen taking the standard route, while Gronholm headed for the joker. Kristoffersson pressured Timmy Hansen hard for the lead and on lap three stuck his Audi's nose up the inside of the Peugeot, but backed out, opening the door for Kevin Hansen, who threw his own Peugeot up the inside. The pair ran side-by-side through the following chicane, Kristoffersson careering over the kerbs. All that fighting had played into Gronholm's hands and when the leading trio joked, the Finn took advantage to seize his second win of the campaign.

The Hansen brothers completed the podium, as Kristoffersson finished third on track but was given a five-second track-marker penalty and dropped to sixth.

HAL RIDGE



WEEKEND WINNERS

WORLD RALLYCROSS
MONTALEGRE (PRT)
 Niclas Gronholm
 GRX-SET (Hyundai i20)

SUPER FORMULA
MOTEGI (JPN)
 Hiroki Otsu
 Mugen Team Goh (Dallara-Honda SF19)

NASCAR CUP
TEXAS (USA)
 Kyle Larson
 Hendrick Motorsports
 (Chevrolet Camaro)

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES
TEXAS (USA)
 John Hunter Nemechek
 Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota Supra)

INTERCONTINENTAL GT CHALLENGE
INDIANAPOLIS (USA)
 Christopher Haase/Markus Winkelhock/
 Patric Niederhauser
 Sainteloc Racing (Audi R8 LMS GT3)

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Nojiri takes the crown as Otsu triumphs

SUPER FORMULA
MOTEGI (JPN)
17 OCTOBER
ROUND 6/7

Tomoki Nojiri wrapped up his maiden Super Formula title with a race to spare thanks to a fifth-place finish at Motegi, as Hiroki Otsu scored his first series win.

With three victories from the opening five races of the season, Mugen driver Nojiri came into the penultimate round with a strong chance of clinching the crown early, and qualifying third meant he needed only a top-four finish to guarantee it. Yuhi Sekiguchi was one driver in a position to deny Nojiri, but from sixth on the grid the Impul racer could only manage fourth, meaning fifth was enough for Nojiri to seal the deal.

Nojiri's team-mate Otsu converted the pole position he had scored by dint of being the only driver to use slicks on a damp track in the final part of qualifying,



surviving no fewer than three safety car restarts in an incident-filled race. Otsu initially led from reigning champion Naoki Yamamoto on a wet-but-drying track, then Yamamoto bizarrely threw away a chance of a first win of the season by not stopping for slicks during the first safety car period, triggered by a spin for Sacha Fenestraz.

That promoted Sena Sakaguchi to second, but the Inging driver couldn't find a way by fellow rookie Otsu in the remaining restarts.

Sekiguchi had been running third late on, but a mistake allowed Tadasuke Makino (Dandelion Racing) through to claim a first podium finish of the season.

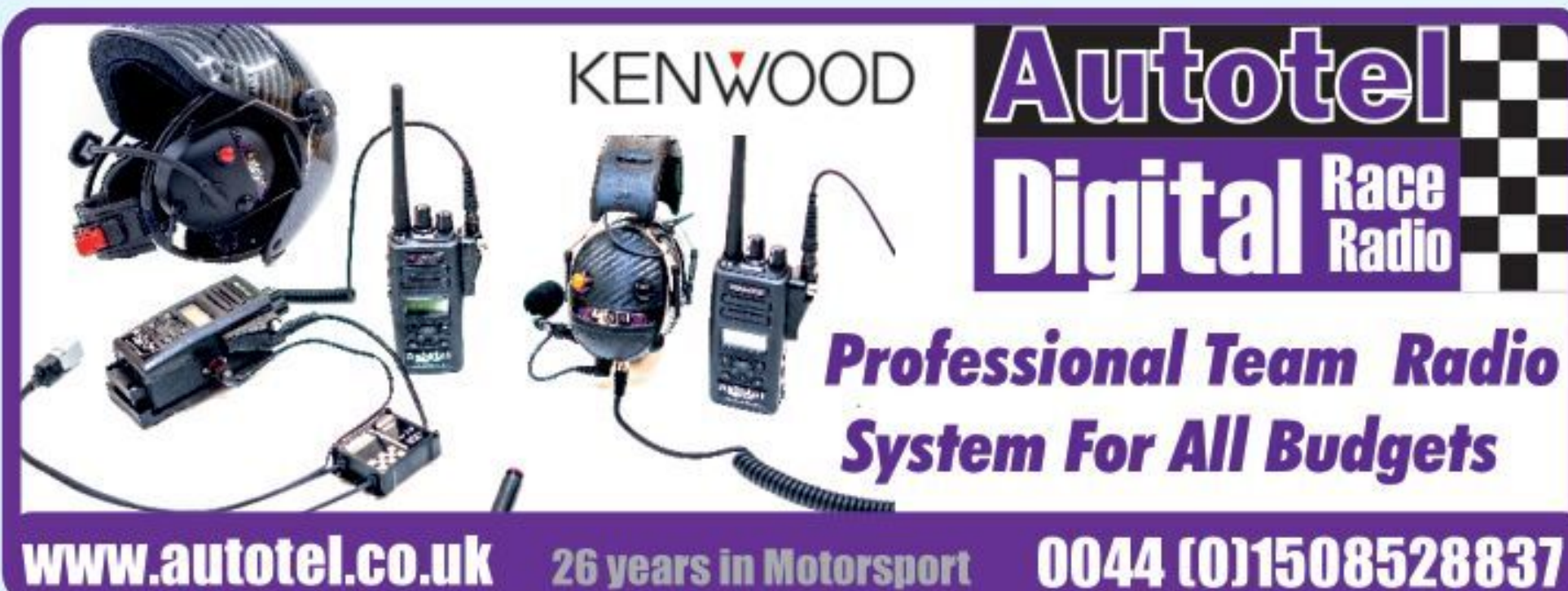
Kazuki Nakajima scored points in seventh on his return to TOM'S, while Kamui Kobayashi (KCMG) was 10th in his first start of the season, having been the first to change to slicks. Of the other returnees, Fenestraz ended up 13th for Kondo Racing and Tatiana Calderon (Drago Corse) crashed at Turn 2, which triggered the second safety car period.

The final caution was due to a clash between Yamamoto and Ryo Hirakawa.

JAMIE KLEIN

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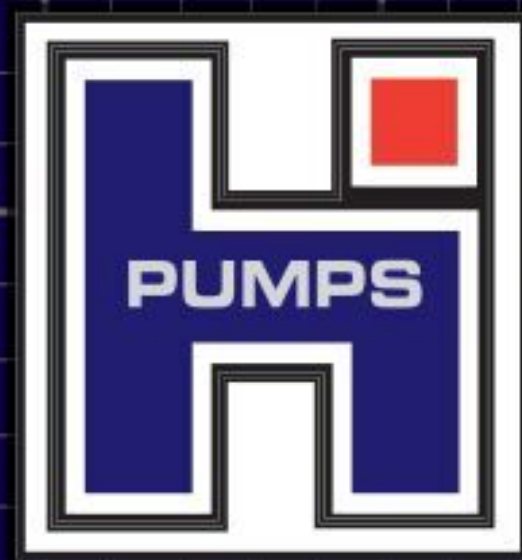


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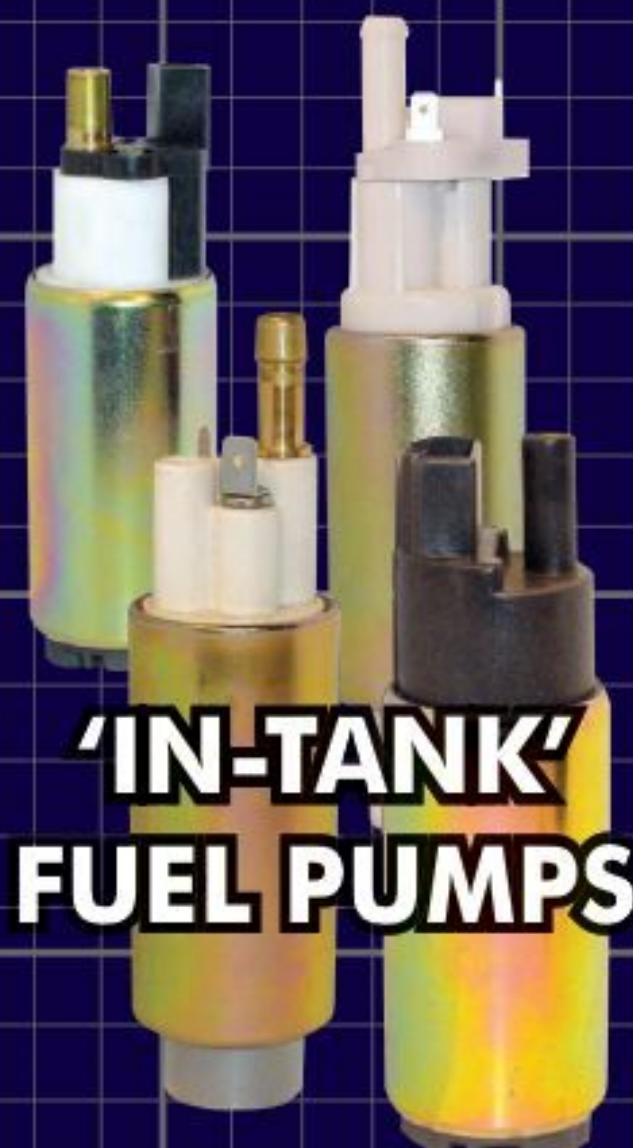
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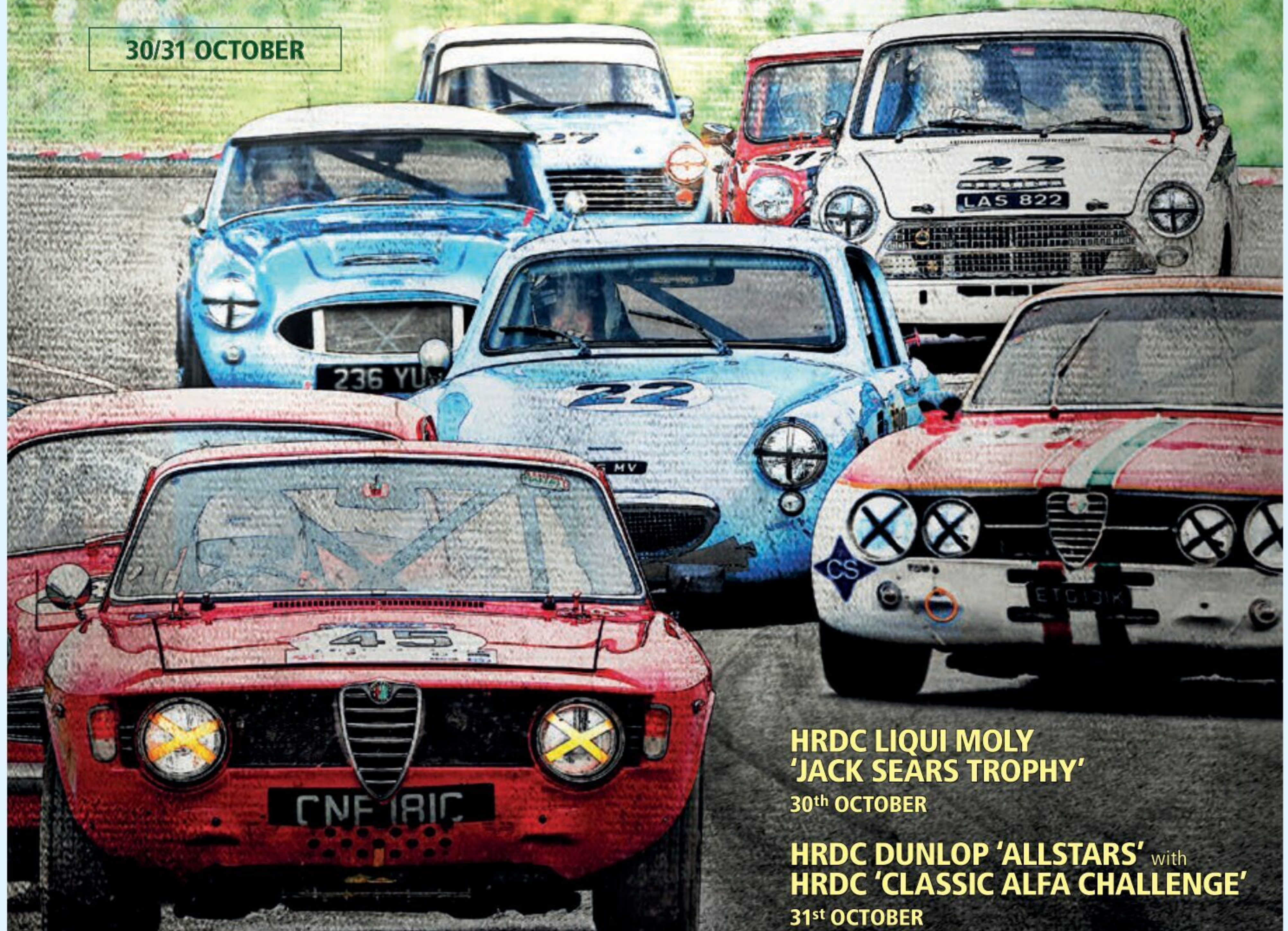
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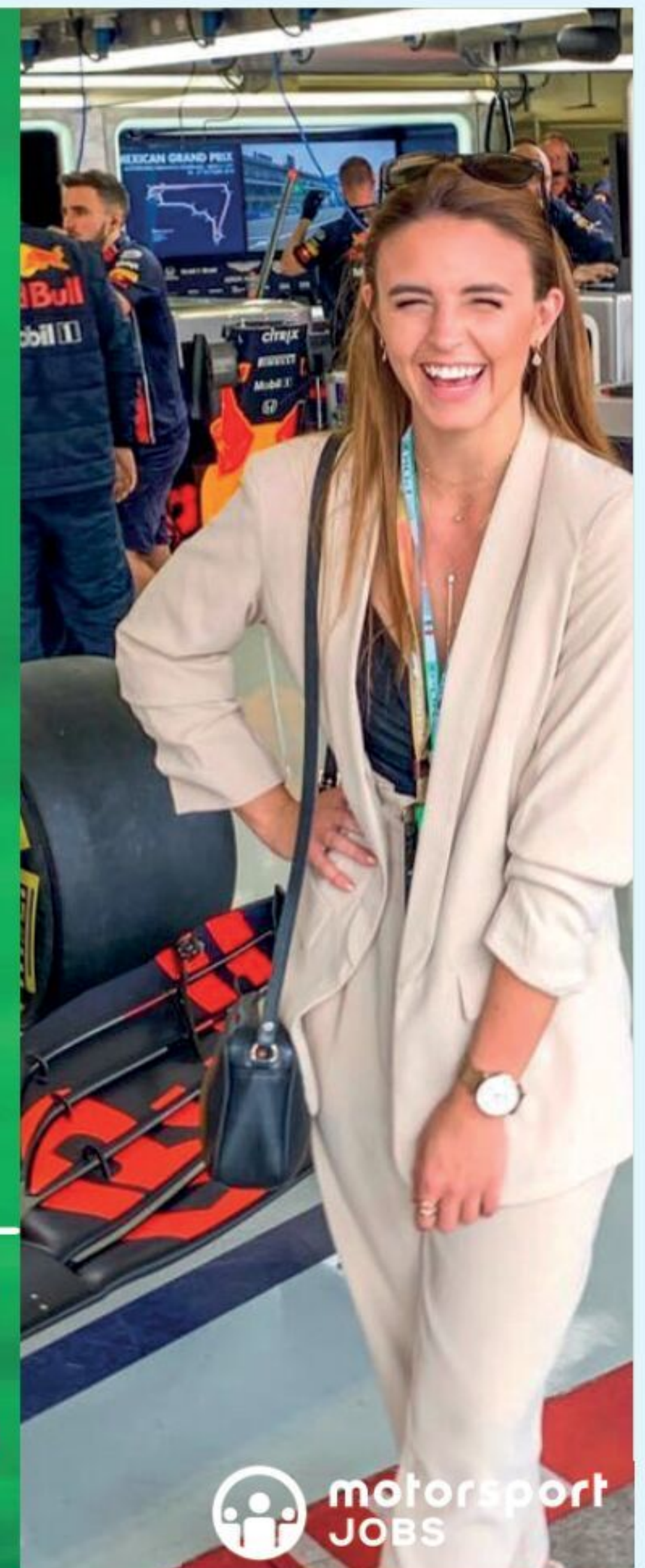
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Title glory for Lind and Machitski

Lamborghini duo successfully endures nervy finale to Donington GT decider



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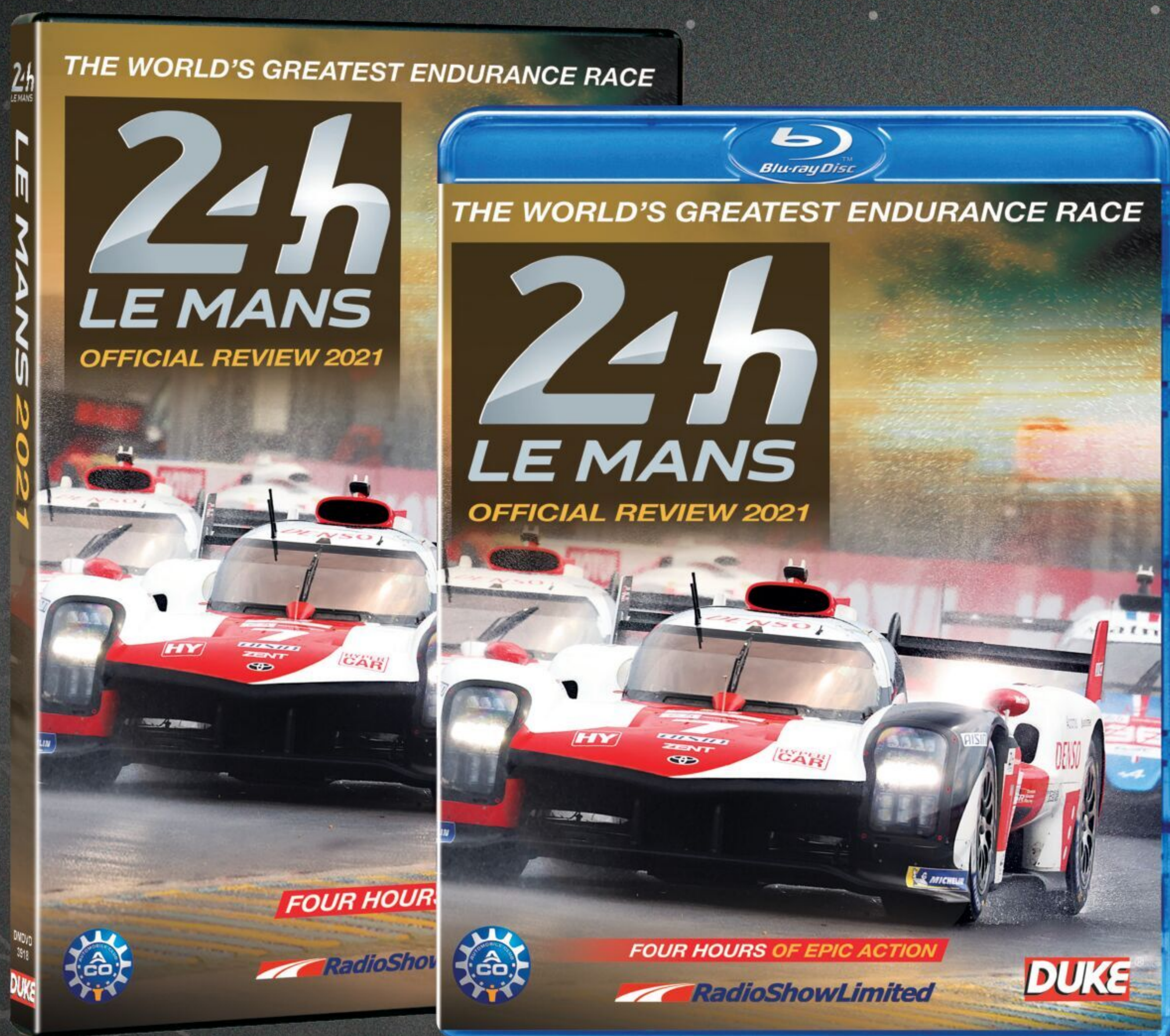


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EX-F1 STAR MORENO TO FESTIVAL, BURT AND HUGHES TO HAYES

FORMULA FORD 1600

Ex-Formula 1 and Indycar driver Roberto Moreno is to race a Van Diemen RF80 at next week's Formula Ford Festival, 41 years after he won the event in a similar car, before former British F3 champion and touring car ace Kelvin Burt takes the seat for the Walter Hayes Trophy.

The programme has been put together by long-time Formula Ford team boss Jonathan Lewis, whose Snetterton Speed Shop operation will run the Van Diemen, plus a 1978 Royale RP26 with a Kenny Acheson-inspired livery at the Hayes for Burt's single-seater contemporary Warren Hughes.

Jonathan Lewis Racing ran Burt to runner-up to David Coulthard in the two 1989 junior FF1600 championships in the UK, and Hughes to a junior title double the following season. JLR then fielded Hughes to the Formula Vauxhall Lotus runner-up position in 1991, when Burt won the title with John Village Automotive. Burt and Hughes have been firm friends ever since, and now coach together for the W Series.

"It's the oldgitsreunited.com division," said Lewis. "I took the cars as part-exchange because I was selling, and I've always loved that era because I used to worship Kenny and Roberto. I thought, 'What am I going to do with them?'"



Moreno was a FF1600 frontrunner in 1980, winning the Festival, and will race RF80 in his old Canadian Club livery

"I'm too old and too fat, so I thought of entering them in the Walter Hayes for Kelvin and Warren."

Lewis kept Moreno abreast of developments on the RF80, raced by Cam Jackson last season. "I'm friends with Roberto and I copied him in with what I'm doing," he added. "Nobody ever bothered to replicate the Canadian Club brown [Moreno's old livery], so that's what I've done."

"Micky Galter was Roberto's mechanic back then, so he's running the car, and I've told Ralph Firman [Van Diemen founder] he's got to

be team manager. Roberto's hot for it: he's seen that Rick Morris [his contemporary] is still racing and that was it — we're testing and everything!"

Lewis is happy that Burt is racing the RF80 as he is of a similar diminutive stature to Moreno, although that only came about because Hughes chose to race the RP26 in Acheson's orange RMC livery. "He chose it because it matches the colour of his hair!" he said. "I think it might be a wise decision because the Van Diemen might be a smidge quicker but the Royale is easier to drive."

MARCUS SIMMONS



Extra heat added as Festival entries top 100

Fourth heat for bumper Festival

FORMULA FORD 1600

More than 100 entries have already been placed for this year's special 50th edition of the Formula Ford Festival and it will feature four heats to cater for the additional competitors.

As well as an extra heat, there will also be two progression races, two semi-finals, a historic final, a last chance race, and the grand final. The historic final will be for the Brian

Jones Trophy, in honour of the legendary commentator and Festival supporter, who died in January.

"The entries are sitting at over 100 and we're really pleased with that," said Peter Daly, chairman of the organising British Racing and Sports Car Club, who added there will be a total of 108 spaces to allow each driver to race at least twice.

"On the Friday at the Mercure hotel at Brands Hatch we're holding an

evening that will be compered by Ben Edwards and will feature Festival memories, including a tribute to Brian Jones.

"We'll be raising a glass to people like Dave Pierre and Bernard Cottrell, who have both been clerks for the Festival, and also Brands marshal Rob Foote."

Ford Performance is one of the Festival sponsors, in a year in which its backing of British Formula 4 ends.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Top GT3 Ams plan to continue next season

BRITISH GT

The top four amateur GT3 drivers in the 2021 British GT standings all plan on continuing in the series next year, with newly crowned double champion Leo Machitski intent on defending his title.

Machitski and fellow Barwell Motorsport driver Adam Balon both plan to remain with the Lamborghini team next season, the squad's commercial director Chris Needell confirmed to Autosport. "That's the plan, that both Leo and Adam will be back next year," he said.

Asked how it sounded to be called a double British GT champion, Machitski said: "Sounds good. Three times sounds better! I really like the racing in British GT. I like the competitors, I like the circuits, so why not? The budget here is more reasonable than Europe, the racing is more demanding here than it is in Europe. With the GT3s and the GT4s on track at the same time, it's a little bit more old-school."

Balon will aim to become the third different Barwell customer in as many years to claim the title in 2022 after Rob Collard in 2020 and Machitski.



Loggie intends to remain in 2022 to try to win British GT title

"I'm looking forward to next season actually, it's my turn next!" he said.

Championship runner-up Ian Loggie (RAM Racing) and Michael Igoe (WPI Motorsport) are also keen to continue, with Loggie likely to remain in the RAM fold. The Scotsman, who for a second year in a row claimed the Pro-Am title with Yelmer Buurman, was disappointed to miss out on the overall crown, which he believed to be "there for the taking".

Loggie, who raced an LMP3 car in the

Asian Le Mans Series at the start of 2021, said that he was "looking at doing other stuff next year" but that he considers British GT unfinished business. "It's on the bucket list – I need to win British GT," he said. "Because I've not won this, I think I've got to come back and do it again."

Igoe said that he had already renewed his deal with co-driver Phil Keen for 2022, saying "100% it will be myself and Phil back next year".

JAMES NEWBOLD

Lind considered retiring before 2021

BRITISH GT

Newly crowned British GT champion Dennis Lind has revealed that he considered retiring from racing after being dropped as a Lamborghini factory driver last year.

The Dane claimed fastest laps in six of the nine races in 2021 and netted the title alongside Barwell Motorsport team-mate Leo Machitski with a fourth-place finish in last weekend's Donington Park season finale.

But Lind told Autosport after sealing the championship that, following his split with WPI Motorsport early in 2020 and subsequent departure from the Lamborghini factory roster for 2021, he had seriously contemplated moving on from racing until a call-up from Barwell boss Mark Lemmer changed his mind.

"I really enjoyed this year and I think it's a pretty good way to bounce back," he said. "Last year wasn't particularly

good for me and I was actually thinking about retiring for a long time.

"I'm 28 years old now and when I got the call from Lamborghini that I didn't have the factory seat for this year, I was like, 'OK, I might as well do something else.' But then I spoke with Mark about three days later and we had a deal on the table."

After suffering health problems in 2019 – "I was sick most of the time and, at the end



of the year, I nearly had a liver exploding on me" – Lind said that this year had been "super-important" to recover his career momentum.

JAMES NEWBOLD

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Middlehurst to defend National title and targets Festival/WHT

FORMULA FORD 1600

Newly crowned National Formula Ford champion Chris Middlehurst plans to defend his title with Team Dolan next year, as well as contest the upcoming Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy events.

Middlehurst overcame a 28-point deficit to Alex Walker heading into the British Racing & Sports Car Club series decider at Snetterton earlier this month. Two podiums and a fifth-place finish were enough to clinch the title after Walker was twice involved in clashes, including one with two-time National champion Niall Murray for which Walker received two penalty points on his licence.

"I keep saying, if I win it, I'll stop but it's addictive," said Middlehurst. "I've raced a lot of other cars but you can't

beat Formula Ford. I'm really enjoying myself. Team Dolan is a great team and we'll come back next year."

Middlehurst repeated his previous National FF1600 Championship success, which came as a 16-year-old in 2011, using the same Van Diemen LA10 chassis and Neil Bold-prepared engine, run then by John Loebell of Medina Sport.

"You don't need the latest machinery," added Middlehurst. "It's down to Bernard Dolan that I'm winning because, although it's the same car, you change things in set-up and it's evolved so much."

"It's good for the championship, the fact that it's such a close race. You've got the Rays of Low Dempsey, the Kevin Mills [Spectrum] cars, Team Dolan, and they are all different chassis."

MARK PAULSON



Double GT5 podium for MX-5 star

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

Reigning Mazda MX-5 Supercup champion Sam Smith impressed on his debut in the Ginetta GT5 Challenge last weekend at Donington Park when he scored a brace of podiums.

Smith, who is on course to retain his Supercup crown, finished runner-up in the first and third races of the weekend and could have claimed another rostrum in race two, but ran wide at the Fogarty Esses on the final lap in wet conditions.

He also came close to taking victory in the final race, in which he pressured championship runner-up Will Aspin until the flag, and is weighing up more outings in the series next year.

"We're just looking at options for next season, he said. "We were meant to be racing with

Alastair Rushforth Motorsport but I didn't realise there were two different cars, one for short drivers and one for tall drivers. And the car he had was for short drivers. I went to sit in it and there was no chance of driving that."

"This was all organised on Wednesday. Lee [Brookes] from TCR has been fantastic and accommodated us."

Having not tested beforehand, Smith was surprised by how different the G40 was to his Mazda. "I just came straight into it," he added. "I didn't think it would be too different to the Mazda but it is quite different. The brake is massively different because there's no servo-assisted brakes, it's like a proper race pedal box, and then the slicks and the sequential gearbox."

STEFAN MACKLEY

IN THE HEADLINES

BATTLE FOR FAMILY HONOUR

Father and son Craig and AJ Owen contested the same race for the first time in the combined Classic Thunder/BOSS races last weekend at Mallory Park. Owen Jr was back in his giantkilling Honda Civic Type R after gearbox problems at the previous round, while his dad, who returned to racing this season after a 10-year absence, was in a Ford Sierra Cosworth. "I passed him down the straight, in front of the rest of the family, which was quite cool," said Owen Jr, who took a best result of fourth in the opener. "He gave me a little wave as I went past."

BELL BAGS RADICAL TITLE

The Radical Challenge title was settled in Matt Bell's favour last weekend at Spa-Francorchamps, despite him not even taking part in the event. Jerome de Sadeleer was the only driver mathematically capable of surpassing Bell but, since he was contesting the Rallye du Maroc in his buggy, Bell decided to give the event a miss too.

TURKINGTON ON HAND

Ahead of going for a fifth British Touring Car crown at Brands Hatch this weekend, West Surrey Racing's Colin Turkington was on hand to award the trophies at the BMW Car Club Racing Championship's end-of-season prizegiving in the Snetterton paddock last Saturday.

CARVELL LOSES VICTORY

A five-second penalty for exceeding track limits cost Rob Carvell victory in the 90-minute 116 Trophy race at Snetterton last Sunday, after he'd taken the lead on the final lap. Mark Sullivan (below), who was passed by Carvell and finished over 2s behind, and his co-driver Sam Carrington-Yates inherited the win, Sullivan only realising he was the victor when he was told entering parc ferme.



Clubmans ace Dickens in ex-Warwick B38

CLASSIC F3

Clubmans frontrunner Steve Dickens made his single-seater debut at Silverstone last weekend in the ex-Derek Warwick Chevron B38 now owned by his friend and rival Clive Wood.

Dickens, who only needs one point from the final round of the Clubmans Sports Prototype Championship at the end of the month to be crowned CSP1 champion, had only ever raced in Clubmans.

"That's what I've done since I was 17," said Dickens. "The F3 car is completely different and much harder to drive but, when you get it right, it's very enjoyable."

He finished eighth and fifth in the pair of Classic F3 races in the car that Warwick competed in for part of the 1977 season, during which he finished third in the BRDC Vandervell F3 standings.

Meanwhile, Wood raced the ex-Peter Williams Formula 2/Atlantic Chevron B29



Dickens took a best result of fifth in Classic F3 in Chevron B38

to two podium finishes in the Aurora Trophy. The car had not raced for many years. It was an unfinished project with the late Colin Thorpe and then, when Thorpe died, the Chevron moved to Ken Thorogood, who still owns it.

The 1975 Chevron was raced in European F2 races in period by privateer Williams in the colours of *Coin* magazine. It then became a Formula Atlantic car and was later converted into a Special Saloon with a Sunbeam Stiletto body and a Rover V8

engine. It is thought unlikely that the B29 had raced in the past 30 years.

Wood planned to debut the car at Donington Park back in April, but a testing accident in March delayed the project and prompted another rebuild at Lifetime Racing. It is now immaculate once more but is unlikely to be raced regularly since Wood plans to concentrate on his March 782 in Historic F2 next season. "It's just a lovely car," said Wood.

PAUL LAWRENCE

Reynolds debuts unusual 1968 Ford Taunus



The Taunus uses similar running gear to Mk3 Cortina

CLASSIC TOURING CARS

Martin Reynolds debuted his Ford Taunus P7, which is unique to British racing, in the Classic Touring Car Racing Club's Pre-'83 Touring Car series at Mallory Park last Sunday.

The 1968 machine, produced by Ford Germany, uses largely the same running gear as the

British-built Mk3 Cortina. Reynolds has transplanted its 3.4-litre engine, with which it previously raced in South Africa, with a three-litre 'Essex' V6.

"I bought it from a company in Northampton and we've converted it over the last seven months," said Reynolds, who also clinched the CTCRC's Blue Oval Saloon

Series in his Ford Anglia. "I think I enjoy building the cars as much as racing. It's not going to be up the front, but it's a lovely car to have on the grid."

Reynolds qualified the Taunus sixth but retired late on from the first race. His next project is a Ford Windsor V8-engined Consul Special Saloon.

MARK PAULSON

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CSCC has enjoyed large Donington entries and now drivers are flocking to Silverstone



Single-day entry record for CSCC's Silverstone GP event

CLASSIC SPORTS CAR CLUB

The Classic Sports Car Club has broken another of its entry records for its season finale at Silverstone this weekend.

The one-day meeting on Sunday on the full Grand Prix circuit has attracted an incredible 348 entries. All five of the grids – which each feature two or more of the club's categories – are full, and the combined Swinging Sixties and Classic K contest has 19 reserves.

"It's the first time the club's been on the full Grand Prix circuit for all of our series so I think that's the draw," said CSCC director David Smitheram. "It's

the day after the Birkett and it clashes with quite a few other meetings, so we're quite pleased with the numbers."

Smitheram added that the event will also feature a first 40-minute pitstop race for the Special Saloons and Modsports series, which usually has shorter sprint races, and says a number of drivers have opted to pair up and run as two-car teams for this.

In each of the past two seasons, the CSCC has attracted over 500 entrants for its Donington Park round, but the actual number who were able to take part dipped below that figure each time.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Fiesta Junior points table revised

FIESTA JUNIOR

Fiesta Junior frontrunner Deagen Fairclough has dropped out of title contention after being stripped of his points from the opening round, where he competed as a guest driver.

An amended points table was issued earlier this month ahead of the season finale at Cadwell Park this weekend, with Jamsport racer Fairclough down in fifth after the points he scored for his double win at Croft in May were erased.

James Wallis has also lost his scores from North Yorkshire.

Championship regulations state that guest drivers cannot score points and, after an extensive review by the series, both have had their totals reduced since they were guests at Croft.

"As per the regulations, if you want to score points, you need to sign a registration form and be registered for the season," explained Peter Daly, chairman of organising club the British Racing & Sports

Car Club. "At the time, they took up the option of competing as a guest driver and there was an administrative error and they were put in the point scoring. They have since registered after the Croft event.

"It was an administrative anomaly and went through the championship stewards. While it's an embarrassing situation, we wanted to rectify it and be thorough and that's why it took a little while. We've got to have a level playing field."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

IN THE HEADLINES

FITZ-SIMON STARS IN LOTUS

Historic Formula Ford frontrunner Horatio Fitz-Simon made his Formula Junior debut at Silverstone last weekend and took a win and a second place in the Lotus 22 owned by Speedsport team boss Mike O'Brien. Period FJunior racer and family friend Howden Ganley encouraged Fitz-Simon to take the chance and was on hand for support. "It's a childhood dream to drive a Lotus around Silverstone," said Fitz-Simon. "It's so different to the Formula Ford but I love it."

EAGLING DEBUTS IN FF2000

Former GT racer Dan Eagling made his Historic Formula Ford 2000 debut at Silverstone when he took over the Reynard SF79 of Graham Ridgway for the weekend. With Ridgway unavailable, Eagling jumped into the car that he prepares and was on the pace. He retired from the opener after being clipped by another car following a spin, but raced from the back of the 30-car grid to finish a fine sixth overall in race two on Sunday.

GOODWOOD'S 2022 DATES

Goodwood has announced the dates for its three main motorsport events next season. After the coronavirus pandemic led to the Members' Meeting switching to an October date this year, it will return to its regular season-opening slot in 2022 and is due to run on 9-10 April. The Festival of Speed is slated for 23-26 June and the Revival for 16-18 September.

NOT BUZZIE ENOUGH

Built by Bristolian Jim Bosisto in 1946, the first of his two Buzzies (below) was in action last weekend at Goodwood in 500cc Formula 3. It amalgamated a Morris 8 chassis, Morgan front suspension, BSA Scout three-wheeler front end at the rear and a flat-twin Douglas motorcycle engine driving through a Manx Norton GP gearbox. The confection returned to competition with Douglas McLay but did not complete a lap in the Don Parker Trophy.



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So much still to play for

It's unusual for all five British Touring Car support series to be up for grabs prior to the finale, so an intriguing curtain-closer is in store this weekend

STEPHEN LICKORISH

It's a pretty safe bet that the British Touring Car champion will be decided at the last race of the season, the close nature of the competition making it difficult for one driver to pull clear from the rest. And, although Ash Sutton enjoys a very healthy 32-point lead heading into this weekend's Brands Hatch finale, it's far from all done and dusted. On the other hand, very often at least one of the BTCC's support categories is all sewn up prior to the trip to Kent. But, for just the third time in the past 10 seasons, none of the overall champions have been crowned with an event to spare.

The Porsche Carrera Cup GB has most frequently been the series already decided prior to the finale – this was the case four times from 2015–20 – but, this year, it's the closest of all in terms of the points gap between the top two without dropped scores being taken into account. Just nine markers separate two-time champion Dan Cammish and chaser Lorcan Hanafin, but it must be noted that the Carrera Cup offers significantly fewer points per race than the other categories, and Cammish's advantage is therefore greater than it actually sounds in comparison to his fellow points leaders.

A battle royale between Cammish and reigning champion Harry King was expected this year, but instead the impressive Hanafin has often been the one to beat – the JTR driver has taken more poles and race-one victories than anyone in the competitive field. But misfortune and little errors in the reversed-grid contests have proved costly, and Redline racer Cammish's consistency means he will be tough to topple this weekend. Plus, he has been here before and knows what it takes to win a title, while Hanafin – still in only his second year of senior racing – does not have that past experience.

Charging rookie Kiern Jewiss and King do retain slim chances of taking the title, but it would be a very dramatic turn of events for either of them, particularly King, to triumph. Having said that, back in 2018 – the last time none of the TOCA support titles had been decided ahead of the finale – the Carrera Cup did have a dramatic conclusion, Dino Zamparelli spinning from the lead of the opener and missing out to Tio Ellinas by just two points.

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Dan Cammish	111
2	Lorcan Hanafin	102
3	Kiern Jewiss	95
4	Harry King	87
5	Will Martin	65
6	Lewis Plato	59

BRITISH FORMULA 4

1	Matthew Rees	296
2	Matias Zagazeta	284
3	McKenzy Cresswell	249
4	Joel Granfors	228
5	James Hedley	210
6	Joseph Loake	181

MINI CHALLENGE

1	Dan Zelos	631
2	Max Bird	600
3	Jack Davidson	567
4	Sam Weller	513
5	Max Coates	485
6	Lewis Brown	476

GINETTA JUNIOR

1	Aston Millar	581
2	Liam McNeilly	533
3	Seb Hopkins	470
4	Robert de Haan	436
5	Will Jenkins	418
6	Callum Voisin	381

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

1	Adam Smalley	554
2	Tom Hibbert	510
3	Josh Rattican	493
4	Carlito Miracco	414
5	James Blake-Baldwin	358
6	Reece Somerfield	343

Drivers in **bold** are those in contention

Probably the most difficult champion to predict is the British Formula 4 winner. JHR's Matthew Rees heads to Brands 12 points clear of Peruvian Matias Zagazeta (Argenti Motorsport), but such a small advantage means it's very much still up for grabs. Rees reclaimed the initiative with a double victory last time out at Donington Park. Considering the Leicestershire venue was far from his favourite and he was still top of the class, he is confident ahead of the finale. McKenzie Cresswell and Joel Granfors are both just about still in contention, but some way further back from the top two.

There is plenty still to play for in the Mini Challenge, with over 150 points still available and just 31 separating Excelr8 Motorsport team-mates Dan Zelos and Max Bird. Zelos, who has led the way for much of the campaign and has taken the most wins, is still well-placed to secure a crown he has missed out on for the past two years, but a tricky Donington event means Bird is much closer than Zelos would like at this crucial stage of the season. But, given the sheer number of points on offer, the Mini battle has the largest number of drivers still in the picture, and Jack Davidson, Sam Weller, Max Coates and Lewis Brown cannot yet be discounted.

The two Ginetta points leaders have the greatest gaps at present, but it's far from over in these championships either. R Racing's Aston Millar enjoys a 48-point cushion in Ginetta Junior over Liam McNeilly (Fox Motorsport), largely thanks to his stunning consistency this year. This is the only two-horse race among the five series but, with a packed grid, there are plenty of others who could play a part in shaping the title's destiny.

Elite Motorsport's Adam Smalley enjoys a similar 44-point advantage in the GT4 Supercup. It had been very close between him

and Rob Boston Racing driver Tom Hibbert until Donington, where a nightmare for Hibbert dropped him back into the clutches of Smalley's team-mate Josh Rattican, who remains in with a shout of overall glory in his first season out of Ginetta Junior.

With so much still to play for, an intriguing weekend at Brands is therefore in prospect. And, as always, there's likely to be many more twists and turns in these title battles still to come. 🏁



Lind and Machitski bag crown after tense finale

DONINGTON PARK
BRITISH GT
16-17 OCTOBER

It was widely anticipated that Dennis Lind and Leo Machitski would convert their 18.5-point pre-race advantage into British GT title spoils at Donington Park, and they didn't disappoint.

But it was a nailbiting race for the Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini pair, who have Enduro Motorsport's breakout winners Marcus Clutton and Morgan Tillbrook to thank for keeping RAM Racing Mercedes rivals Yelmer Buurman and Ian Loggie off the top spot that would have tipped the balance in their favour. Fourth place was enough, just, for Lind and Machitski on a day when their Huracan was, for

once, not really in the fight.

"It was horrific, because it was totally out of our hands," said Barwell commercial director Chris Needell. A relieved Machitski admitted: "I've never rooted for a competitor as much as I did in the last 30 minutes. I think I aged 10 years!"

The Enduro McLaren hadn't finished on the podium all year – its previous best of fourth came in the July Donington race – but it was in the hunt all weekend, despite a patchwork crew with many of its regular hands on Indianapolis 8 Hours duty.

Clutton laid down a mark of intent by lapping just 0.006 seconds slower than pacesetter Phil Keen (WPI Lamborghini) in the Pro qualifying session, while Tillbrook was third quickest of the Ams behind Keen's co-driver Michael Igoe and Richard

Neary – enough for second on aggregate.

On a greasy track that been soaked for morning warm-up but was drying steadily, the entire GT3 field selected wets at the start. Tillbrook lost out to Neary on the exit of Redgate, but regained second when Igoe spun at the Old Hairpin in a classic case of the leader's curse.

"You don't realise how slippery it is until you're actually there and, when I got there, it was too late," said Igoe. Another spin one lap later as he attempted to fight back through the GT4 cars left Igoe stranded in the Coppice gravel and WPI's slim title hopes gone. Such was his pace upon eventually rejoining, three laps down, that the team projected it could have negated its 20s pitstop success penalty...

Neary led Tillbrook and Loggie until lap

RUNNER-UP SPOT FOR MOORE/COWLEY AFTER GT4 VICTORY

Will Moore and Matt Cowley secured runner-up spot in the GT4 standings with their second win of the season at Donington, the Academy Motorsport Ford Mustang pair denying Alain Valente and Michael Benyahia's Team Rocket RJN McLaren a maiden win.

Valente and Benyahia have endured rotten luck this year and were long overdue a strong finish – they were denied a likely victory at Snetterton by a puncture, and missed out at Oulton Park with Benyahia's ill-judged move on team-mate James Kell.

But the McLaren "just didn't have the pace for the win", believed Valente, on a track where

the Mustang has traditionally shone.

After Moore and Benyahia had both cleared struggling Richard Williams's polesitting Steller Audi, Benyahia hit the front by passing Moore on lap seven. But as the track dried, both were usurped by a charging Will Burns, the title-winning Century Motorsport BMW continuing its record of leading every race this season with Burns's 20th-lap pass on Benyahia.

The BMW had pulled a five-second gap by the stops but, with a 20s success penalty to serve, Gus Burton resumed third behind Valente and Cowley, a position he held until the end.

Valente gave his best to fend Cowley off but,

despite serving 10s extra in the pits, the Mustang was an irrepressible force. "From the times, we knew it was fairly inevitable," admitted RJN boss Bob Neville. Cowley dived through at the Melbourne Hairpin on lap 48 and Valente had no answer. "Sector one and sector three was OK, sector two I just lost too much," he said.

Academy boss Matt Nicoll-Jones said: "We said to Matt, 'Pull a gap of about three seconds and manage it.'" And manage it he did.

Cowley was 2.5s to the good when the race was red-flagged, Jordan Collard's seventh-placed McLaren coming to a stop at Coppice with what Neville described as a recurrence of



GT3 champions: Lind (left) and Machitski

19, when the RAM driver cannily boxed Tillbrook in behind a GT4 McLaren and bravely passed both around the outside into the Old Hairpin. Even with a success penalty of 10s to serve, Buurman rejoined – now on slicks – still in second, but found Clutton in a mood “to take some big risks” and unwilling to settle for third. “That proved critical, that’s what got me in the lead – once everyone got their bearings, there was nothing in it again,” Clutton said of his aggressive opening laps, including “doing a wet line on slicks” at Redgate.

On lap 39 of 70, Buurman was suckered into defending the wet inside line into the Melbourne Hairpin and ran deep. Clutton accepted the gift and set off after leader Sam Neary (in for his dad), who had lost most of his post-pitstop advantage with “a bit of a moment and quite a bit of traffic” on lap 40. “I lost quite a bit of time at the start, eventually the car got better but I just don’t think we really had the pace in those conditions to win today,” said Neary Jr.

After several attacks, the fired-up Clutton dived up the inside at Goddards on lap 45, making contact with Neary, who thought the move “wasn’t really on”, before powering ahead on exit. “He was the faster car today,” Neary Jr conceded.

The top three bunched together while lapping a returning Jordan Witt, but



Tillbrook/Clutton took race win in McLaren

Neary wasn’t able to get another shot at Clutton before an excursion at Redgate dropped him behind Buurman.

Try as he might, the Dutchman couldn’t get close enough to challenge before the race was halted when Jordan Collard’s GT4 car spluttered to a stop at Coppice with three minutes of the two-hour contest remaining. Loggie believed the two track-limits warnings Buurman had in reserve could have made a difference.

That meant Machitski and Lind were safe, despite the former’s struggles in the early stint while driving “to the limit that I was comfortable”. The 2006 champion forced his way past team-mate Adam Balon at Coppice on lap one, but lost time battling with Balon and Andrew Howard over fourth, then overshot the Esses and was nearly collected by Balon upon rejoining.

“It was really close,” said Balon, “but we didn’t touch.” Balon eventually got the move done when Machitski’s tyres overheated – he’d taken a different set-up direction after struggling with pressures that were too low for wet races at Snetterton and Oulton Park – but the Barwell twins swapped again through the stops. Lind emerged fourth ahead of Sandy Mitchell, the Scot fending off sustained pressure from Scott Malvern’s Team Parker Porsche to the end.

JAMES NEWBOLD

WEEKEND WINNERS

GT3

(70 laps) 1 Morgan Tillbrook/Marcus Clutton (McLaren 720S); 2 Ian Loggie/Yelmer Buurman (Mercedes-AMG GT3) +1.989s; 3 Richard Neary/Sam Neary (Mercedes); 4 Leo Machitski/Dennis Lind (Lamborghini Huracan Evo); 5 Adam Balon/Sandy Mitchell (Lamborghini); 6 Nick Jones/Scott Malvern (Porsche 911 GT3-R). **Fastest lap** Lind 1m28.236s (101.48mph). **Pole** Michael Igoe/Phil Keen (Lamborghini). **Starters** 12.

Points 1 Machitski/Lind 172; 2 Loggie/Buurman 162.5; 3 Balon/Mitchell 142.5; 4 Igoe/Keen 135; 5 Andrew Howard 129.5; 6 Jonny Adam 111.5.

GT4

(65 laps) 1 Will Moore/Matt Cowley (Ford Mustang GT4, below); 2 Michael Benyahia/Alain Valente (McLaren 570S) +2.514s; 3 Will Burns/Gus Burton (BMW M4); 4 Nick Halstead/Jamie Stanley (McLaren); 5 Matt Topham/Darren Turner (Aston Martin Vantage); 6 David Holloway/Bradley Ellis (Aston Martin). **FL** Sennan Fielding (Audi R8 LMS GT4) 1m36.045s (93.23mph).

P Richard Williams/Fielding. **S** 14.

Points 1 Burns/Burton 209; 2 Moore/Cowley 112.5; 3 James Kell/Jordan Collard 107.5; 4 Topham/Turner 106.5; 5 Chris Salkeld/Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke 102.5; 6 Jack Brown/Ashley Marshall 79.5.



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

“a fault with using too much fuel” that the team thought it had addressed in qualifying.

The win for Academy lifted Cowley and Moore above the non-scoring Collard and Kell as a result, capping a strong recovery from two damage-induced DNFs in the opening three races – its drivers utterly blameless both times.

“We have had some raw luck this year, really bad, but we’re just over the moon with that,” summarised Nicoll-Jones. Despite finishing behind Pro-Am rival Fox Motorsport, Newbridge Aston Martin pair Matt Topham and Darren Turner claimed the sub-class title in fifth.

JAMES NEWBOLD



Moore/Cowley stormed to the win in Ford Mustang

Double victory for O'Sullivan secures crown

**DONINGTON PARK
BRSCC
16-17 OCTOBER**

"Five weeks we've been waiting for this," proclaimed a delighted Zak O'Sullivan after securing the GB3 Championship at the final meeting of the season. His attempted pass for the lead on Luke Browning at the previous Oulton Park round had left him in the barriers, pointless and unsure if he had done enough to claim the title.

It turned out that the 16-year-old had – he went to Donington as champion-elect mathematically, with the number of competitors influencing how many points would be available for the fully-reversed-grid race, where a point is on offer for each position gained. With a maximum of 110 points up for grabs across the three races and a 112-point buffer over Ayrton Simmons, Carlin driver O'Sullivan was assured of the championship as he lined up for the opener, barring any indiscretions that might bring him a points penalty.

But the teenager took the title in style, claiming pole with a new championship qualifying lap record for the circuit, before battling side-by-side with Hitech GP's Reece Ushijima through the opening corners, the pair repeating their fight at the same track from earlier in the season. Just as he had done then, O'Sullivan held top spot into the Old Hairpin, before going on to win by nearly a second.

"It's great to get my first championship with the boys and girls in blue," said O'Sullivan. "The early phase of the championship we were able to build a bit of a lead, and in the second phase I've been quite unlucky with a few DNFs and it's been championship management since."

Behind the leading pair, Roman Bilinski



took another podium in his Arden-run machine after avoiding a multi-car collision between Sebastian Alvarez, Christian Mansell, Simmons and Roberto Faria at McLeans on the opening lap, from which Alvarez retired. The chaos allowed Simmons's Chris Dittmann Racing team-mate Branden Oxley to finish an impressive fourth from 10th on the grid.

O'Sullivan's intention to "have some fun" in a wet race two came to pass when, from third at the safety car start, he deposed Bart Horsten at the Old Hairpin before diving for the lead past Ushijima at the Melbourne Hairpin and checking out.

While Ushijima held on for second again, 7.389s in arrears, Horsten (Hitech) lost third to Mansell (Carlin) after running wide at Coppice on the final tour. Simmons took fifth with one of the overtaking moves of the year, hanging on around the outside of Bilinski at Coppice. Bilinski finished sixth before a 6s penalty for an opening-lap collision with Alvarez dropped him to ninth.

Focus turned to second place in the standings for the fully-reversed-grid race,

with Simmons and Mansell tied on points and Ushijima five behind ahead of the final race for the current Tatuus chassis.

Any hope for Ushijima disappeared along with the air in his right-rear tyre on the opening lap, while Mansell finished 14th after colliding with Javier Sagrera. Simmons, minus left-front-wing element, took 10th, while O'Sullivan finished his championship-winning season eighth from 21st on the grid.

At the head of the field, Fortec's Mikkel Grundtvig repeated his reversed-grid win from earlier in the season at Donington. The Dane led from pole, while Alex Fores and Frederick Lubin completed the rostrum.

Angus Whiteside capitalised on 2021 champion Toby Trice's absence to win two Ginetta GT Academy races. His first success came in a wet race two, where he remained composed as his nearest rivals all made mistakes in treacherous conditions. The Rookie class champion took another impressive win in a dry race three, despite bogging down off the line from pole. A track-limits penalty cost Roy Alderslade in the opener, dropping him to fourth as Wes Pearce took a maiden series win.

With Theo Edgerton sitting out the final Porsche Sprint Challenge GB meeting of the year having secured the title, 2020 champion James Dorlin returned to dominate proceedings with two lights-to-flag victories. Success in a wet opener came after early pressure from Matthew Armstrong, before a more commanding win in the dry second race ahead of championship runner-up Jack Bartholomew.

Five-time BMW Compact Cup champion Steven Dailly took his customary brace of wins, despite an excursion in race one after sliding wide on dropped oil at the Fogarty Esses. Guy Davis was his closest challenger on both occasions.

STEFAN MACKLEY





O'Sullivan (51) and Ushijima battled for the lead in race one

WEEKEND WINNERS

GB3 CHAMPIONSHIP

Race 1 (12 laps) 1 Zak O'Sullivan; 2 Reece Ushijima +0.961s; 3 Roman Bilinski; 4 Branden Oxley; 5 Tom Lebbon; 6 Bryce Aron. **Fastest lap** Bart Horsten 1m24.259s (106.27mph). **Pole** O'Sullivan. **Starters** 21.

Race 2 (11 laps) 1 O'Sullivan; 2 Ushijima +7.389s; 3 Christian Mansell; 4 Horsten; 5 Ayrton Simmons; 6 Aron. **FL** O'Sullivan 1m41.959s (87.82mph). **P** Ushijima. **S** 21.

Race 3 (12 laps) 1 Mikkel Grundtvig; 2 Alex Fores +0.958s; 3 Frederick Lubin; 4 Roberto Faria; 5 Lebbon; 6 Jonathan Browne. **FL** Ushijima 1m25.226s (105.06mph). **P** Grundtvig. **S** 21.

Points 1 O'Sullivan 545; 2 Simmons 381; 3 Mansell 371; 4 Ushijima 366; 5 Faria 360; 6 Horsten 333.

GINETTA GT ACADEMY

Race 1 Wes Pearce

Races 2 & 3 Angus Whiteside

PORSCHE SPRINT CHALLENGE GB

Races 1 & 2 James Dorlin (below)

BMW COMPACT CUP

Races 1 & 2 Steven Dailly

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

Race 1 John Bennett

Races 2 & 3 Will Aspin



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

STEED OVERCOMES GT5 CHALLENGE



A championship success means a lot to any driver, but the crowning of Josh Steed as the Ginetta GT5 Challenge title winner at Donington held particular significance.

The 19-year-old had previously raced in the category in 2019, but the COVID-19 pandemic last year put his racing on hold, as did the death of his father. A return was always going to be tough given the circumstances, but even more so since he only had limited funds.

"Originally we were going to take the year out because of COVID-19, we thought it wasn't going to be quite the same, and then two months later my dad passed away and then it was a definite no," said Steed of his 2020 plans. By the skin of my teeth, we managed to get the money for the first two races [in 2021] and I knew the only way I could afford to do the whole season was to win."

Win races he did, and the Xentek Motorsport driver had dominated with eight victories to his name prior to Donington, where he entered the event on the cusp of the championship.

After starting eighth in race one, he climbed to second by the flag, only to be demoted to fourth with a post-race time penalty for track-limits abuse. This was still enough for the title, and he would be promoted back to third when other drivers

fell foul of the stewards. "We didn't really know we were champion until after about five minutes in the paddock," admitted Steed. "It's hard to put into words really, it's been a long way to get here and I want to thank my sponsors and my mum."

That was as good as the weekend got for Steed. He spun at the Old Hairpin on the opening lap of race two, which was held in a downpour, and recovered to 15th, before being demoted to 17th with a 10s penalty for a false start. In race three, this time in the dry, he climbed to fifth.

While Steed recorded a rare weekend without a win, his main rival for the title, Will Aspin, should have left Donington with a hat-trick. As others battled behind, he romped to victory in the opener, only to be disqualified along with five other drivers for exceeding track limits under waved yellow flags.

There was no repeat of the mistake in the second race, where the Elite Motorsport driver slithered his way to victory in wet conditions from Mikey Doble.

While the first two races had been relatively easy, Aspin had a harder time in the finale, with reigning Mazda MX-5 Supercup champion Sam Smith – on his series debut – making him work for it. The pair made contact into the Melbourne Hairpin on lap eight of 12, allowing Will Orton to close up and leaving Smith with the tricky task of attacking while also defending.

In the end, Aspin held on as Smith secured his second podium of the weekend after finishing as runner-up in race one. Victory in the opener was handed to John Bennett after Aspin's disqualification, but a worthy title belonged to Steed.

STEFAN MACKLEY



Aspin won three times on the road at Donington

Jackson (centre)
battled hard with
McArthur (left) and
Fitz-Simon all
weekend



Jackson triumphs after frenetic FF1600 finale

SILVERSTONE
HSCC
16-17 OCTOBER

Three fiercely competitive Historic Formula Ford 1600 races settled the title in favour of Cam Jackson and his Winkelmann during the Historic Sports Car Club's annual Silverstone Finals meeting.

Five cars ran wheel to wheel for much of the opener on Saturday. Tom McArthur managed to outbrake himself into Brooklands and fell away from the pack, but not far enough that he couldn't drag himself back into contention. As Horatio Fitz-Simon, Jackson and Linton Stutely battled furiously, all the time McArthur was closing back in as the three leaders tussled and slowed themselves down.

On the final lap, McArthur's Titan caught the group and doors opened, allowing him to dive through to take a remarkable but unexpected victory over Fitz-Simon, Jackson, Stutely and the chasing Samuel Harrison. "If they'd

not been fighting, I wouldn't have caught them," said McArthur. "It was great fun!"

It was even closer at the end of the afternoon on Saturday when the quintet ran wheel to wheel to the flag. It got so close on one lap at Becketts that Fitz-Simon lost his Merlyn's nosecone against the back of McArthur's car. But it didn't slow his pace and somehow Fitz-Simon managed to stay ahead in the frantic dash to the line, where five cars were covered by a second.

On Sunday, the track was wet and Jackson and Fitz-Simon edged clear. But they were disqualified for passing a backmarker under yellow flags and so Stutely, after a time-consuming trip through the Luffield gravel, inherited victory in his Royale.

Graham Fennimore claimed the opening Historic Formula Ford 2000 race despite intense pressure from Benn Simms and series returnee Tom Smith, having a guest race in Graham Ridgway's Reynard SF78. Smith missed second gear off the line and that was enough of a handicap to leave him chasing his rivals.

On Sunday, Simms drove a blinder to fend off Fennimore for all but the last 300 yards. Even a red flag and restart couldn't unsettle Simms, but a last-lap backmarker helped Fennimore get up alongside. They went wheel to wheel through Luffield for the last time, and Fennimore's SF81 had the inside line to win the drag race to the flag by the thickness of a coat of paint.

Not to be outdone, the Classic Formula Ford races were every bit as good, with Jordan Harrison and Henry Chart setting the pace. Harrison won the opener to clinch a well-deserved overall crown after a fine season in his Lola T540E, while Chart's Van Diemen RF81 won on Sunday by just 0.07 seconds after an awesome contest. Ben Tinkler was right in there until a spin at Brooklands dropped him to fourth behind Rick Morris.

Will Plant settled the '70s Road Sports crown with another accomplished victory in his Morgan +8 as his father Richard rode shotgun in his similar car. Jim Dean did all he could in a bid for another title with his Lotus Europa, but had to settle for a class win and third overall.

Not content with his frontrunning Historic Formula Ford pace, Fitz-Simon also tackled the pair of Formula Junior races in Mike O'Brien's Lotus 22. He took to the Junior like a duck to water and loved the whole experience as he won the opener in commanding style from Clive Richards's similar machine, after a mid-race safety car. On Sunday's wet track, Richards skilfully took his revenge in a close battle.

Rory Smith has got his Ralt RT4 working better than ever and was able to take a resounding win in Saturday's Aurora and Geoff Lees Trophy race. Over the early laps, Mark Charteris put his F2 March 742



Sims kept his Mini ahead of more powerful machinery in Historic Touring Car opener

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: WALKER

WEEKEND WINNERS

HISTORIC FF1600

Race 1 Tom McArthur (Titan Mk4)

Race 2 Horatio Fitz-Simon (Merlyn Mk20)

Race 3 Linton Stutely (Royale RP3)

HISTORIC FF2000

Races 1 & 2 Graham Fennimore
(Reynard SF81, below)

CLASSIC FF1600

Race 1 Jordan Harrison (Lola T540E)

Race 2 Henry Chart (Van Diemen RF81)

'70s ROAD SPORTS

Will Plant (Morgan +8)

FORMULA JUNIOR

Race 1 Horatio Fitz-Simon (Lotus 22)

Race 2 Clive Richards (Lotus 22)

AURORA TROPHY/GEOFF LEES TROPHY

Race 1 Rory Smith (Ralt RT4)

Race 2 Samuel Harrison (Dallara 389)

CLASSIC F3

Races 1 & 2 Andrew Smith (March 783)

HISTORIC TOURING CARS

Race 1 Tim Sims (Mini Cooper S)

Race 2 Dan Williamson (Ford Falcon)

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS

John Davison (Lotus Elan)

GUARDS TROPHY

Andy Newall (Chevron B6)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

firmly in contention with Smith but, as the race progressed and the March started to understeer, the newer Ralt edged clear. On Sunday, Samuel Harrison (Dallara 389) went for wets and battled ahead of Smith to lead, but was almost caught as the balance swung back towards the slick-shod Smith in the final laps. "I needed one more lap," said Smith of his chase of the teenager.

Andrew Smith was a resounding double winner in Classic F3 and Tim Sims starred in the Historic Touring Car opener as he kept his Mini ahead on the damp track. Later, on a dry surface, Dan Williamson charged ahead in his Ford Falcon.

PAUL LAWRENCE



DRYBROUGH BACK ON TRACK Sussex dental implant surgeon Ross Drybrough made a welcome return to racing in Historic Formula Ford at Silverstone. In July, Drybrough suffered a nasty accident at Brands Hatch when a tangle of wheels flipped his Merlyn at Druids and his left hand was hurt. After surgery to remove his little finger, he was back racing in his other car, a March 709, last weekend. "I'm having a lot of physio on my hand and I wanted to get back out before the end of the season," he said.



ONE TO WATCH One of the new stars of Historic Touring Car racing this season has been Harry Phelps. When he debuted his Ford Anglia at Silverstone in May, it was his first time on track, yet his exuberant handling immediately caught the eye. Phelps (24) is an engineer at Swiftune and has developed the Anglia into a very effective racer. Despite just a handful of events this year, his pace and style have been mightily impressive in the car he runs with his father Mark, who looks after the cars of Bob Bullen.



FROM BRAGA TO LOLA Fresh from a fabulous performance in the FIA Hillclimb Masters at Braga in Portugal a week earlier, when he won his division, Alex Summers returned to racing at Silverstone and had a second run out in his father Richard's Formula 5000 Lola T140. The Lola is one of the earliest F5000s from the late 1960s and is a different beast, but Summers once more showed his versatility and pace with two fine class-winning drives in the Aurora Trophy.

The force is with Morgan in F1000 Jedi decider



Morgan battled back from coolant leak and stall to seal the F1000 crown

SNETTERTON 750MC 16-17 OCTOBER

Lee Morgan's recovery from near-disaster to be crowned F1000 champion for a second time was among the highlights of an intensely unpredictable 750 Motor Club season finale at Snetterton, which decided seven outright titles across 23 races contested by more than 300 drivers.

On Saturday, Thomas Gadd won the first of the weekend's three F1000 encounters, but was under pressure at the finish from the fast-closing Rob Welham. Morgan,

his car spraying out coolant, kept going to finish third ahead of Matthew Booth, who'd started from pole but lost places off the line with suspected clutch gremlins. Dan Gore, who went into the event leading the standings, retired with a misfire that had affected him in qualifying and things would only get worse.

Morgan's car stalled at the start of the second race and Gore, surging through from the back, missed him by inches, spinning over the grass and across the circuit. He kept it out of the barriers but, on spin-turning back onto the track, a driveshaft broke. With his and Morgan's

cars stranded, the red flags flew.

At the restart, Ed Falkingham led from his reversed-grid pole before both Welham and Booth moved past, and he then lost further places with a grassy moment exiting Williams. Welham held on for the win from Booth and Gadd, while Morgan, joining from the pitlane, came through to 11th. Crucially, Morgan set fastest lap, which gave him pole for race three.

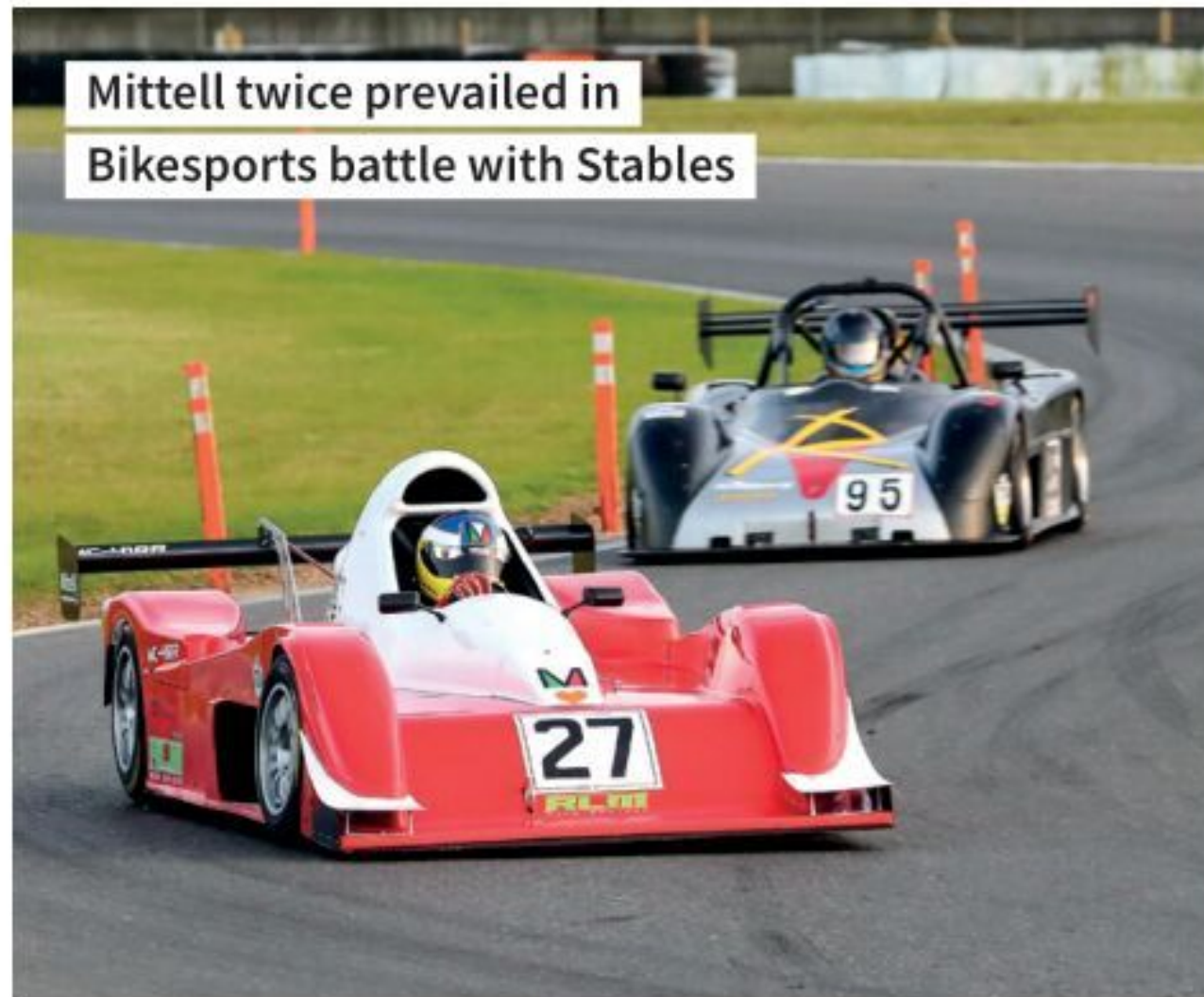
Four went into it with a chance of the title – Morgan, Booth and Welham thanks to their earlier performances, and still, somehow, Gore. But that quickly became three when the luckless Gore stopped yet again when his misfire returned on lap two after he'd already carved his way through to ninth from 22nd.

Out front, Morgan led from Gadd while Welham fended off Booth for third, these two swapping places mid-race. In the closing stages, Gadd, liking his tyres, moved past Morgan for his second win of the day and his third in five races (the second highest of anyone this season).

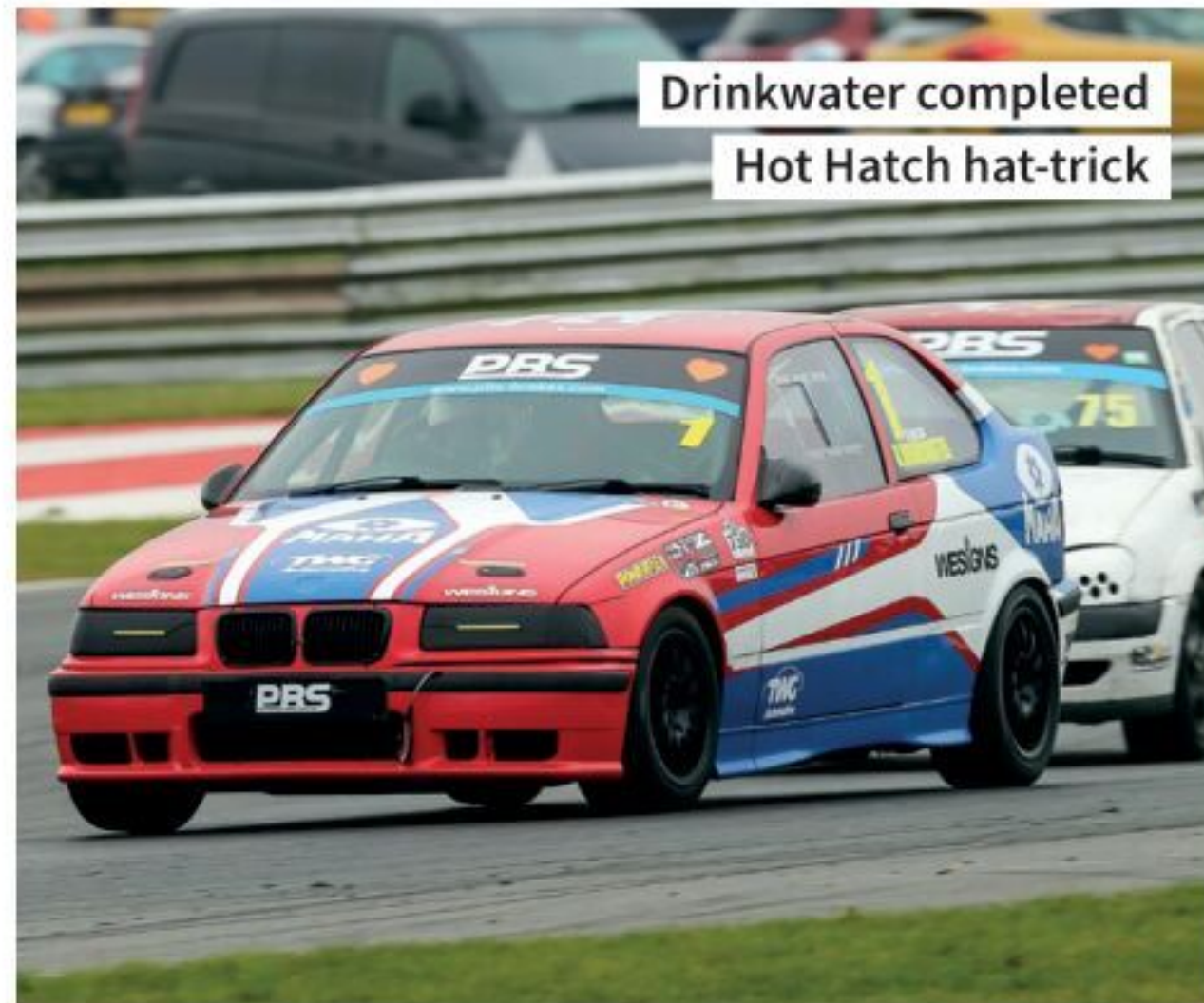
Morgan knew the score, however, and was happy to take second and with it the championship. "I knew a top-four really would do it, so when Thomas made his move I was quite happy to open the door and let him go," said Perpetuum driver Morgan. "It's been 10 times harder this year compared to 2013 when I won it before. There was good competition then but the



Dear's Peugeot was a double winner in Classic Stock Hatch



Mittell twice prevailed in Bikesports battle with Stables



Drinkwater completed Hot Hatch hat-trick



Short leads Bray during entertaining MX-5 scrap

pace at the front now is 100% better.”

David Drinkwater made it a hat-trick of Hot Hatch titles with three Class C wins in his BMW Compact, which he needed to get the measure of Citroen Saxo trio Paul Kaynes, Wayne Shackleford and Martyn Paget.

For the premier Class A title, Philip Wright did all he could to topple fellow Honda Civic Type R rival Alistair Camp. Wright won the first two races outright, and it could have been a hat-trick had his car not lost all gears bar fourth while leading the third encounter. That left Ryan Polley to hussle his way past Camp for victory, which made up for the disappointment of Saturday's opening race, when he'd retired from the lead after his Type R cut out through Riches.

Jack Ashton's spectacular Rover Metro GTi was a thorn in the side of the Hondas all weekend. In race two it even led for several laps, Ashton eventually taking a best-ever result of second ahead of Camp, whose third in that race added to two seconds was enough to give him the coveted Class A title.

Jack Dwane continued his recent race-winning form with a pair of victories that gave him the Clio 182 championship, each time finishing just ahead of main rival Jack Kingsbury. In the opener, both did well to catch moments on coolant dropped at Williams by Christopher Keir's car, which – ironically – had lost the fluid after crunching into the back of Kingsbury.

Dwane immediately asserted himself at the front of race two, while Kingsbury took half a lap to find a way past Scott Edgar into second. With the pair evenly matched, that was enough to give Dwane the breathing space he needed to stay ahead and be sure of the crown. Edgar, as in Saturday's race, took third, this time after a race-long scrap with Keir.

Two more wins in Class B ensured that a tearful Leon Morrell was crowned Bikesports champion in his Radical SR3, while a pair of outright victories for Scott Mittell over Joe Stables gave him the premier class A title.

The opening race had a surprise ending. Stables's Radical PR6 led a restarted one-lap dash as far as the Wilson hairpin where he spun – distracted, he claimed, by the safety car board lights still being on at the entry to the corner. Mittell, who'd been caught and passed by Stables before the stoppage, thus took an admittedly “lucky” win ahead of the excellent Morrell and recovering Stables.

Ben Pearson took the Class 6 and outright BMW Car Club title in his E46 330Ci, as Brad Sheehan and Niall Bradley took turns to lead each other home for an overall win apiece in their E46 M3s.

Danny Andrew needed to repass a determined Jonathan Lisseter on the final lap to be sure of two Ma7da race wins as he cruised to the title.

Andy Hiley's Chronos HR1S,

performing better since a switch to Avon tyres, was unstoppable in both Sport Specials races as the 64-year-old swept to a third straight title.

On a one-off outing, Ali Bray triumphed in the first two Mazda MX-5 Cup races but, in the third, newly crowned champ Ben Short put him in his place. After the two former rivals had traded the lead several times in the closing laps, that is...

Chris Dear won both Classic Stock Hatch encounters. Fellow Peugeot 205 GTi driver Stewart Place led the second until running wide exiting Murray's, and later only just held on to second from Ed Cooper (Vauxhall Nova GSi), with whom he'd tussled earlier.

CARL MCKELLAR

WEEKEND WINNERS

F1000

Races 1 & 3 Thomas Gadd

Race 2 Robert Welham

HOT HATCH

Races 1 & 2 Philip Wright (Honda Civic Type R)

Race 3 Ryan Polley (Honda Civic Type R)

CLIO 182s

Races 1 & 2 Jack Dwane (below)

BIKESPORTS

Races 1 & 2 Scott Mittell (Mittell MC41RR)

BMW CAR CLUB RACING

Race 1 Niall Bradley (E46 M3)

Race 2 Brad Sheehan (E46 M3)

MA7DA

Races 1 & 2 Danny Andrew

SPORT SPECIALS

Races 1 & 2 Andy Hiley (Chronos HR1S)

MX-5 CUP

Races 1 & 2 Ali Bray

Race 3 Ben Short

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH

Races 1 & 2 Chris Dear (Peugeot 205 GTi)

ROADSPORTS

Paul Cook (BMW E46 M3)

116 TROPHY

Samuel Carrington-Yates/Mark Sullivan



For full results visit: 750mc.co.uk



Little versus large: there was a win apiece for Slater (left) and Greenhalgh

JONES

Mixed conditions lead to classic touring car battles

**MALLORY PARK
BARC
17 OCTOBER**

The Classic Touring Car Racing Club staged its championship finale at Mallory Park last weekend with six of the seven categories' titles still to be decided.

Robyn Slater claimed a maiden overall win from pole position in the wet opening Pre-'66 race. His 1550cc Ford Anglia was initially passed by James Ibbotson's even nimbler Hillman Imp before squeezing back ahead into the Esses and pulling clear of fellow Anglia driver Kevin Swann to win by 10 seconds. Alan Greenhalgh's mighty Ford Falcon briefly split the Anglias mid-race, powering past Swann on the Kirkby Straight, only to head towards Hinckley rather than round Gerard's, before recovering to fourth behind Ibbotson.

In still greasy conditions, Greenhalgh made his extra grunt count in race two,

which was shortened to a five-lap dash after an early off for Roger Stanford's Lotus Cortina exiting Gerard's. Piers Grange overestimated the available grip in the Esses when his Ford Mustang went for a wild ride over the grass after thundering past Slater for the lead. So it was left to Greenhalgh to overhaul the Anglia for victory, while David Hall took third from 11th on the grid in his Lotus Cortina. Ninth overall, but first in class, was enough for Ibbotson to seal the title in the 24-year-old's first year of racing.

After being passed by the spectacular Tom Harvey's BMW E21 320 on the final lap, second for Stephen Primett in the Pre-'83 opener levelled his points total with Mark Lucock, driving a similar Ford Escort Mk1. Following a quick gearbox change, Primett then managed to overhaul Mark Osborne's Triumph Dolomite Sprint and escape to win race two, adding another title to his bulging CV in the process. A sticking throttle cost Lucock dear, forcing

him to cut the ignition when placed third in both races, while Harvey also dropped out of race two with his car stuck in gear.

Already crowned Pre-'03 champion, Gary Prebble looked set for another win until his Honda Civic skated straight on at Shaw's hairpin. That promoted Andy Neal's rapid little Peugeot 106 and the BMW M3 E30 of James Everard. Prebble returned to second at Gerard's, but his challenge fell away as the track dried. Everard's late pace might have toppled Neal with another lap, but he had to settle for second and Pre-'93 honours.

Back on a dry set-up and with brake bias tweaked, Prebble made amends with a commanding win in the sequel, despite a misfire in the closing stages, over Everard and the newer BMW of Ian Bower, who wrapped up the Pre-'93 championship.

The big machines in the Jaguar Saloon and GT Championship proved a real handful in the wet. Regular pacesetter Tom Robinson constantly fought wheelspin in his supercharged XJR6, which slewed around as he applied the power. After passing the fast-starting Mike Seabourne's XJ40, Robinson went off at Shaw's and dropped to fifth before working his way back through to win by just one second.

"If it wasn't for the bigger picture and being in the championship hunt, I'd like to think I could have given Tom Robinson a hard time," said wet-weather ace Seabourne after narrowly missing out on a shock overall win in his Standard Modified-class machine. Instead, he celebrated championship success with a careful drive to sixth overall and third in class later in the day, as Fully Modified runner Robinson took a more comprehensive victory on a nearly dry track.



Primett (left) and Harvey battle was decided on final lap of Pre-'83 opener

JONES

WEEKEND WINNERS

MALLORY PARK

PRE-'66 TOURING CARS

Race 1 Robyn Slater (Ford Anglia)

Race 2 Alan Greenhalgh (Ford Falcon)

PRE-'83 TOURING CARS

Race 1 Tom Harvey (BMW E21 320)

Race 2 Stephen Primett (Ford Escort Mk1)

PRE-'93 & PRE-'03 TOURING CARS

Race 1 Andy Neal (Peugeot 106)

Race 2 Gary Prebble (Honda Civic EG)

JAGUAR SALOONS & GTs

Races 1 & 2 Tom Robinson (XJR6, below)

CLASSIC THUNDER/BOSS

Races 1 & 2 Jason West (BMW E46 M3)

OULTON PARK

FUN CUP ENDURANCE

Races 1 & 2 UVio Hofmann's Lotus

(Scott Fitzgerald/Fabio Randaccio)

NORTHERN & SUPER CLASSIC FORMULA FORD

Races 1 & 2 David McArthur (Medina BH19)

ST-XR CHALLENGE

Race 1 Lee Bowron (ST)

Race 2 Simon Robinson (XR2)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Double Classic Thunder winner Jason West (BMW E46 M3) was thankful for a delay while the grid was reshuffled after the cars left assembly in the wrong order. He might otherwise have missed the race after working from a superseded timetable. Instead, his brace of wins was relatively comfortable.

Blue Oval Saloon Series runner Malcolm Harding's Ford Escort Mk2 led the chase in race one ahead of Jason Hughes's Vauxhall Vectra Super Tourer. That pair were reversed in race two, shortened by a safety car then red flag after James Dunkley's Ford Fiesta shed its rear axle. While Hughes took the Classic Thunder title with a perfect score, it wasn't enough for Harding to overhaul Martin Reynolds (Ford Anglia) in the BOSS points, with Harding left to rue missing a round to contest a clashing Modified Fords event.

MARK PAULSON



More Fun Cup joy for UVio Hofmann's pair after brace

OULTON PARK

BRSCC

16 OCTOBER

The UVio Hofmann's duo of Scott Fitzgerald and Fabio Randaccio made it six Fun Cup Endurance wins out of eight, with a double victory at Oulton Park last weekend.

Fitzgerald had the lead from four-time Clio champion Paul Rivett of Tachosys with RAW Motorsport in the opening stint of the sprint race. But, after two safety car interventions – the second enabling teams to make their final driver change – it was a straight fight to the flag between Fitzgerald and Team Olympian's Riley Phillips, once Phillips had demoted PLR's Neil Plimmer following the resumption. But Phillips could never quite make a move stick, and Fitzgerald took the win by just 0.238 seconds, with Plimmer third.

Greensall Motorsport's Sam Smeeth and Track Focused's Sean Cooper were the pacesetters in the longer four-hour race. But, just into the second hour and after a lengthy safety car period, Fitzgerald had the lead again from Neil Smith for Track Focused.

It was Randaccio's turn to take the chequered flag and, despite losing an earlier 35s lead to another safety car, it was win number two of the day for the UVio crew, with 13.9s to spare. Harry Mailer finished on a double stint for DespatchBay Express to take

second with Andy Bicknell, while PLR was on the podium again with Plimmer/Ben Pitch.

David McArthur was another double winner in Northern Formula Ford with his Medina. Both contests followed a similar pattern, with McArthur and Jack Wolfenden's Firman locked in a race-long duel. They crested Deer Leap for the final time side by side and, coming within inches of touching wheels, McArthur won the drag to the line by 0.026s, with Matthew Chisholm a distant third.

As the same lead pair continued their battle in race two, Chisholm joined them in an early break, but was never able to split the dicing duo. After losing his initial lead to Wolfenden on lap three of nine, McArthur took it back three tours later, securing win number two by 0.134s. Chisholm retained third, but lost touch with the leaders.

Michael Blackburn was first on the road in the ST-XR Challenge opener, but picked up a post-race penalty, dropping him to fourth. Lee Bowron and Chris Jones relegated Chris Grimes a couple of places, meaning Bowron was declared the victor, as Grimes reclaimed second after Jones was also penalised.

Blackburn's win in race two stood, heading home Jones by 0.209s, with Sam Beckett next. Simon Robinson was victorious twice among the XR2s, the latter being an outright victory after the older cars set off first.

PETER SCHERER





A CHALLENGING TOP-DOWN RACING GAMECHANGER



VIDEO GAME
CIRCUIT SUPERSTARS
RRP £14.99

When it comes to racing games, there's no shortage of choice

whether you're a hardcore sim racer or casual gamer.

Circuit Superstars, which launched last week for PC and Xbox — with a release on PlayStation and Nintendo coming soon — sits somewhere in the middle, with its top-down-view experience also offering elements of simulation.

Although it's not on the same level as games such as *iRacing* or even EA's *Formula 1* franchise, as far as top-down games go it's a step away from being a complete arcade offering.

Cars suffer damage, and tyres and fuel can run out, necessitating pitstops. Braking is crucial if you want to make it around the corners (not something you always expect from a top-down game), while, if you want to be quick, using the racing line is a must.



In some respects it's even more of a challenge than your standard racing games. While most other games have assists of some kind, *Circuit Superstars* has none. Aids such as traction control are just pipedreams, and forget about corner arrows or even a clear racing line to help guide you around.

This latter point is perhaps the most crucial element, as track knowledge is king. While in a classic first-person view, the player can usually see the corner approaching, in a top-down view, by the time you see the corner it's already too late. *Circuit Superstars* is no different and this writer can only guess how many times in each race glances were made to the bottom-right corner at the mini-map.

In the absence of actual assists, players can select one of five difficulty levels, and each vehicle requires a different approach.

There's no licensing here, but there are influences from the real world for the cars (featuring single-seater, rallycross and GT) and even the tracks, with one of them clearly based on the Imola circuit. What's pleasing is that each car does handle differently, with the modern F1-style machine prone to oversteer, while the trucks feel heavy but are no less challenging to drive.

All this means that players will have to spend a decent amount of time on the game just to get to a competent level, and although it didn't take long to beat the AI on the bottom difficulty setting, there's still plenty of scope to improve.

The 'vanilla' game comes with 12 different vehicles and 19 tracks across 13 locations — which is almost certain to be expanded upon — while car liveries, driver suits, helmets and victory celebrations are all customisable.

There are four game modes available including



New game *Circuit Superstars* offers plenty of challenge both on and off-road



online multiplayer, split screen/local multiplayer, grand prix solo tournaments and single-player free play mode.

Online races feature the usual opening-lap carnage that any racing game brings, but it's not all outright anarchy. Expecting to exploit corner cuts or wall-ride your way to victory? Well think again, as developer Original Fire Games has put in penalty systems to deter such antics, with a player's car slowing down for a period of time based on the indiscretion.

The game has also been in the hands of real-world racing drivers such as Romain Grosjean, Lando Norris and Jamie Chadwick, with their best times featuring as part of free downloadable content where users can drive around the *Top Gear* test track.

Coming back to the earlier point about a lack of corner arrows, even if you know the *Top Gear* circuit, it will still take a couple of tours to make sure you're tackling the layout in the correct manner.

A well-polished game, its pop-art style and crisp colours make for an appealing visual experience, with keyboards and controllers compatible, while even the oldest of laptops should be able to play it on lower settings.

While top-down racing games are not for all, there's enough of a performance ceiling that means even those who can pick up the game quickly can still find a reason to return, while casual players can still jump in solo or with friends and get enjoyment out of it.

Currently available on PC and Xbox One – due for release on PlayStation 4 and Nintendo Switch.

STEFAN MACKLEY

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

United States Grand Prix

F1 World Championship
Round 17/22

Austin, USA
24 October

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sun 1955

TV Highlights

Sky Sports F1, Sun 2330, Channel 4, Mon 0005

W Series

Round 7/7

Austin, USA
23-24 October

TV Live

More4, Sat 2305, Channel 4, Sun 1630

European Le Mans Series

Round 6/6

Algarve, Portugal
24 October

TV Live

Motorsport.tv, Sun 1200

International GT Open

Round 7/7

Barcelona, Spain
23-24 October

Euroformula Open

Round 8/8

Barcelona, Spain
23-24 October

ADAC GT Masters

Round 6/7

Hockenheim, Germany
23-24 October

TV Live

Motorsport.tv, Sat 1525, Sun 1525

Super GT

Round 6/8

Autopolis, Japan
24 October

TV Live on Motorsport.tv, Sat 0530, Sun 0530

NASCAR Cup Series

Round 34/36

Kansas Speedway, USA

24 October

TV Live

Premier Sports 2, Sun 1930

NASCAR Xfinity Series

Round 31/33

Kansas Speedway, USA
23 October

Extreme E

Round 4/5

Sardinia, Italy
24 October

TV Live

Eurosport 2, Sun 1500, Sky Sports Mix, Sun 1600, ITV, Sun 1600

MotoGP

Round 16/18

Misano, Italy
24 October

TV Live

BT Sport 2, Sun 1230

TV Highlights

BT Sport 2, Mon 0800, ITV4, Mon 2000

UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch BARC

23-24 October

British F4, BTCC, Ginetta GT4 Supercup, Ginetta Junior, Mini Challenge, Porsche Carrera Cup

TV Live

ITV4, Sun 1045

Oulton Park BARC

23 October

C1s, CNC Sports/Saloons, Kumho BMWs, Tiedeman Trophy

Kirkistown 500MRCI

23 October

Fiesta Zetecs, Ginetta Junior, Roadsports, Saloons/GTs/Mazdas

Silverstone 750MC

23 October

Birkett Six-Hour Relay

Cadwell Park BRSCC

23-24 October

Caterham (270R, 310R, Academy, Roadsport, Seven UK), CityCar Cup, Fiestas, Fiesta Juniors

Donington Park BARC

23-24 October

2CVs, Britcar (Endurance/Praga, Trophy), JSCC, Mini Miglia, Mini Se7en, Sports Prototype Cup, Superkarts

Snetterton CTA

23-24 October

Civic Cup, Time Attack

Silverstone CSCC

24 October

Classic K, Future Classics, Magnificent Sevens, Modern Classics, New Millennium, Open Series, Slicks Series, Special Saloons & Modsports, Swinging 60s, Tin Tops, Turbo Tin Tops



TEE/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



FROM THE ARCHIVE

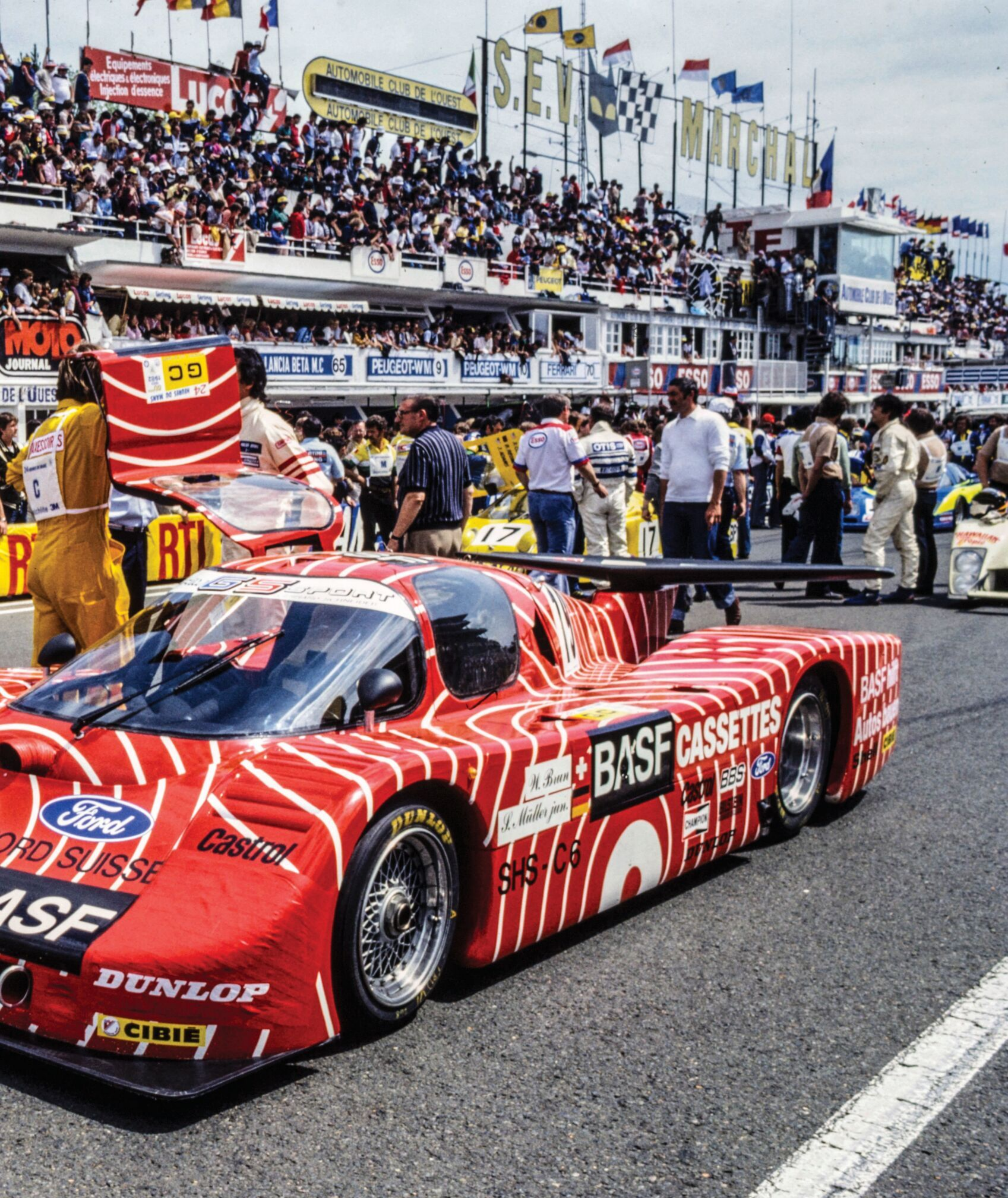
The #19 Sauber-Ford SHS C6 shared by Walter Brun and Siegfried Muller Jr sits in 15th place on the grid alongside, but officially one place ahead of, the

#11 Rondeau-Ford M382 of Francois Migault, Gordon Spice and Xavier Lapeyre during the countdown to the start of the 1982 Le Mans 24 Hours. Unfortunately neither car made the finish, the Sauber stymied by

its starter motor and the Rondeau succumbing to ignition issues after 55 and 150 laps respectively. The race was dominated by Porsche, the #1, #2 and #3 factory 956s sweeping the podium in that very order.

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When drivers crop up in unexpected places

NATHAN FREKE

The 2000s was a period of huge US success for British drivers, with Indycar, Indianapolis 500 and Indy Pro Series triumphs aplenty. Century Motorsport British GT boss Nathan Freke had high hopes of emulating Mark Taylor, Jay Howard and Alex Lloyd by winning the IRL-supporting Indy Pro (now Indy Lights) title, but his American dream more closely resembled a nightmare that was curtailed after three uncompetitive races in 2008.

The 2006 British Formula Ford champion joined minnow squad Michael Crawford Motorsports after an introduction from series promoter Roger Bailey, despite having only a fraction of the already meagre (by Indy Pro standards) \$250,000 budget. “We had about £60,000, family money from remortgaged houses,” he recalls.

Freke took the plunge, but soon regretted turning down computer game magnate Ian Hetherington’s offer of a free Porsche Carrera Cup GB drive to pursue his single-seater dreams. “It was obvious, even walking into the paddock, that we weren’t in the same league as the others,” he says. “When you’re racing against teams asking for a million-dollar budget and they’re trying to do it on 250k, you’re foolish to think that you can compete.”



Freke, here at Homestead in 2008, knew he was woefully short of budget



JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

“I SAID, ‘WE’RE SETTING FIRE TO OUR MONEY.’ THAT’S HOW TO BURN £60K IN NO TIME”

Gearbox issues robbed him of practice time for his oval debut at Homestead, where he was “8mph down on average speed despite being full throttle all the time” and “understeered straight into the side” of a rival while being lapped. Given that other cars would comfortably run three-wide for lap after lap, Freke says “alarm bells were going off”.

Finishing eighth at St Petersburg came as a boost, but another fraught test at Indianapolis convinced him to throw in the towel. “I said, ‘I’m scared to drive this car, I feel like I’m going to crash into the wall at every corner,’” he says. “I told mum and dad, ‘We’re setting fire to our money here.’ That’s how to burn £60k in no time!”

His dreams looked over on returning to the UK, but Hetherington – “the saviour of my racing career” – funded a drive in the 2009 Ginetta G50 Cup, which Freke duly dominated. It rejuvenated his career and helped get Century established in the BTCC support paddock where it remains today, alongside its GT operations.

JAMES NEWBOLD



IN NEXT WEEK’S ISSUE

F1 action from Austin

WHO WILL STRIKE NEXT BLOW AS F1 RETURNS TO THE USA?

GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

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